

2 Timothy
Last Words; Lasting Words
Faithful Men and Women, Part 2
2 Timothy 2:1-7

Sermon Notes

Service opportunities/needs at our church:

- home group leaders and hosts
- worship team members
- children's ministry team
- events team
- welcome team

A Theology of Glory: A theology of glory presupposes that I can achieve glory (salvation) by my good works. "A theology of glory expects total success, finding all the answers, winning all the battles, and living happily ever after. The theology of glory is all about my strength, my power, and my works." (Gene Veith)

A Theology of the Cross: Our sin has separated us from God. Since we can never undo the wrong we have done, and since our very nature is sinful from birth, it is impossible to reach God through our own efforts. Because he loved us, God made a way for us to live with him eternally by sending his Son to live the life we could not live and die the death that we deserved. God meets us, in Jesus, at the cross. The life we live as followers of Jesus is a cross-centered life – we are dead to self and alive to God.

A Soldier of Christ Jesus

- Our commanding officer is always right; there are no wasted sacrifices.
- He does what he does for his glory, which is always good for us.
- Therefore, we seek to please the one who enlisted us.
- We give up some of the pleasures of life that others enjoy because we have been given a task.
- We willingly accept our responsibility without knowing the bigger picture.
- We are called to do our part for the benefit of others.
- Sometimes, in the Lord's design, we are called to make the ultimate sacrifice of our lives for the advancement of the kingdom. This is a tough one in a prosperous nation. We do not want to be pawns. We want to be bishops and

knights so that our sacrifice is meaningful. Brothers and sisters – all sacrifice is meaningful!

The Athlete Seeking Gold

Athletes training for the Olympics, which is likely what Paul had in mind, followed strict training regimens. It was one of the few instances in which officials were allowed to whip Roman citizens. Each town would send athletes for ten months of training under strict supervision. During training, the athletes would check out the competition. Second place was unacceptable, so on occasion if someone knew he was bound to lose, he would sneak away from the training. Imagine a scene where a silver medalist comes home to his parents and weeps before his mother or father. If you have this picture in your mind you are thinking of modern times. In ancient times, parents, as well as the entire community, would practically shun the failed athlete who was only the second fastest or second strongest human being in the Roman Empire.

This understanding brings new meaning to Paul's claim in 1 Corinthians 9 to buffet his body his body to win the crown from the Lord – no unacceptable second place for Paul. In my attempt to be biblical, I will, at times, “buffet” my body. Not if I were an athlete on a quest to win the prize, though. When you serve the Lord, there is much that others enjoy that you sacrifice so you can be in the best shape to compete at the highest levels. We have world-class athletes in our church family. Ask them what it takes to compete on the world stage.

The Hard-Working Farmer

And then there is the farmer. Talk about a challenging and difficult life! Some of you would love to be farmers. In fact, many of you grow things and give with generous hearts! The rest of us are so thankful for you! I have thought many times, and have said to Alison, – “I am so glad I am not a farmer!” Why? Farming is every day. Day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year. There are many activities, including travel, that you cannot enjoy during the planting, growing, and harvesting months. After the harvest is done, you are still busy fixing all the things that broke during the planting, growing, and harvesting seasons. Yes, the farmer gets a taste of the fruits of his or her labor before others. What joy to partake of one's labors! Still, Paul's emphasis to Timothy is the “hard working farmer.”

Robert Yarborough A statement like 2 Timothy 2:2 (“what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also”), which might seem like a generic reminder to make disciples, takes on a

grave weight when evangelizing and equipping others may well bring the discipler into the same legal quandary that Paul, facing execution, must contend with. Paul is reminding Timothy of the theology of the cross. Timothy must not skate quickly over Paul's examples of the soldier, athlete, and farmer but take them to heart as they bring home the nonnegotiable necessity of joining with Paul in suffering.

Application points from the Sermon

1. All believers are called to a cruciform life
2. Faithful men and women are called to pass the gospel to new believers and to the next generation
3. It is best to serve within your gifting, if possible
4. Rest is biblical – you might need a break
5. Remember the soldier, the athlete, and the farmer

Scripture Associated with the Sermon

Acts 9:22 But Saul (the Apostle Paul) **increased all the more in strength**, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

1 Timothy 1:12 I thank him **who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord**, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service.

1 Corinthians 9:24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. **25** Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. **26** So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. **27** But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, **16** to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. **Who is sufficient for these things?**

1 Corinthians 1:20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? **21** For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. **22** For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, **23** **but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles**, **24** but to those who are called, both Jews and

Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Revelation 2:10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. **Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.**

Matthew 10:40 “Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. 41 **The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward,** and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. 42 And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

Luke 9:23 And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Acts 20:35 In all things I (Paul) have shown you that **by working hard** in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, **‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”**

Acts 16:14 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. **The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.** 15 And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.

More About the Ministries that Need Servers

From the sermon:

- home group leaders and hosts

We have new groups coming online this fall, but we could use a few more. On August 30, 3 weeks from today, we will have all our home group leaders on hand so that after the service you can ask questions and get a feel for the different groups. It is not too late to talk with Ricky Lee about hosting and/or leading a group. There are minimum times before leading or hosting a group in addition to membership requirements, so as I said last week, if you are certain this is where God is planting you – and I hope it is – I would encourage you to move toward membership. Also, we need:

➤ worship team members

We also need new worship team members. We need keyboard players, drummers, bass, guitarists, vocalists, sound and video techs, both for the screen here and for livestreaming.

On Friday night, our students led a night of worship. I counted nine very talented musicians on the stage leading many of us in lifting our hearts and our praise to the Lord. That is what they chose to do with their Friday night! Where would we be without students on our Sunday morning team, both in front of house and in back of house?

Currently we have 60 men and women on our team, but we could use more. Many of our ministries are designed to limit the number of days you are asked to serve. It is one of the ways we try to head off burnout. We always – I mean, also – need:

➤ children's ministry team

I am not sure I have ever known a church that had enough children's ministry workers. We have 82 workers in children's ministry, but if we are going to limit the number of services people are asked to fill, we need 22 more. Kyler and other leaders talked about the ways that our students interacted with unbelievers on the mission trip with a theological sophistication that is frankly surprising. This is true of many of our middle and high school students, whether they went to Calgary or not. The depth of gospel knowledge and understanding that our students display is a testament to home life – and, to children's ministry. Do not miss out on the blessing of being a part of preparing the next generation to know, proclaim, and pass along the gospel. Also, we need workers on the:

➤ events team

On August 30, we will have our next Discovery Lunch, which is an opportunity for those who are brand new – or almost brand new – to Grace to meet with staff, elders, and their spouses to know a little more about our church. We will have a delicious lunch to enjoy while we get to know each other. The events team is a big part of the success of such lunches. Also, they set up and cleaned after the potluck we had this past week. These sorts of meetings build community, and the events team plays an important role. The BUDI team could use new folks as well. You can find out about all these ministries on our website. One last team to mention is the:

➤ welcome team

I consistently hear about what a friendly church Grace is. That means that many of you are already unofficially participating in welcome team sort of ministry. Welcome team members function as traffic cops, though. New folks need direction and we need more people who know how to direct them to the places they need to go. Being a welcome team member allows you to serve while you are already here. We need more traffic helpers. Get connected and get busy!

A couple of years ago, I went to a softball game where at least one of our teams was playing. I was sitting in the stands watching the team play and I thought, “I could do that. No, I couldn’t!” If you thought, when I was going through this list, “I could do that!” and you didn’t immediately think “No I couldn’t,” then keep ministry service in mind as we go through the text this morning, which is 2 Timothy 2:1-7. This is Part 2.