Grace Evangelical Free Church November 29, 2026
2 Timothy 2:1-26 Constancy and Perseverance

Paul knew that Timothy needed two things: constancy and perseverance. Paul exhorts Timothy to be constant and to press on in the service to which God has called him. Given we tend to be inconsistent, to fluctuate and to be unstable, every servant of the Lord needs to this exhortation:

2 Timothy 2:3: "**Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.**"

- **Grammatical Usage:** "**Share in suffering**" or in the Greek, "synkakopathēson" means, "endure hardship with someone as a co-sufferer."

- **Literal Interpretation:** Put up with your share of hardship as a loyal soldier in Christ's army.

- **Contextual/Comparison:** God keeps His Word: God continually uses His Word. Note the appeal that Paul makes to Timothy: he gives us a seven-fold description of believers.

  1. As SONS, we are to be strong in the grace of Christ (v. 1)
  When Paul called Timothy "**my son**" he meant that Timothy was converted through his ministry. Every Christian, however, is a child of God (**John 1:12**); and as sons of God, we are to grow up in a spiritual sense (**2 Peter 3:18**). Growing does not take place automatically. We must have:
  - the right food – the Word of God;
  - the right amount of air – prayer;
  - the right amount of sleep – rest
  - the right amount of association: communion with the Lord;
  - the right amount of exercise – Christian service.

  Paul confirmed with Timothy: growth is not automated but achieved.

  2. As SOLDIERS, we are to be steadfast and disciplined (vv. 3-4)
  Paul spoke from experience when he exhorted Timothy to endure hardship like a good soldier…for the apostle certainly experienced a great deal of affliction and suffering (**2 Corinthians 11:23-29**). Every soldier has to make sacrifices and be prepared for suffering. Soldiers have to leave home, family and friends, they must be prepared for a different climate, they have to live on army rations, and they do this all for the sake of their country. Christians should live like this for the Lord. But notice what Paul then says in **v. 4**, that a soldier must not get involved in civilian affairs. It is easy for us to be taken up with worldly things, to adopt the world's standards and to fall in with its mind-set. The Christian soldier's great desire must be to "**please his commanding officer**" (**v. 4**).

  3. As ATHLETES, we are to compete according to the rules (v. 5)
  Paul had in mind the Grecian games, and in those contests anyone who broke the rules not only failed to win the prize but was sometimes disgraced and punished. This brings us face to face with the fact that one day we shall have to appear at the Judgment Seat of

Reverend Tony Raker
Grace Evangelical Free Church, 718 E. Queen Street, Strasburg, VA 22657
tonyraker@yahoo.com / www.graceevfreechurchva.org

Christ, to be rewarded or to suffer loss (**1 Corinthians 3:12-15**; **1 Corinthians 9:24-27**). The rules that relate to the race in which we are running are all contained in the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit waits to apply that Word to us in order that we may keep the rules and obtain the prize.

4. As LABOURERS, we are to work for a harvest (v. 6)
Before a farmer can expect to reap a harvest he must work very hard. He must plough, prepare, fertilize and then sow the seed. This is what Paul is saying to Timothy. Labor must precede reward. If we would reap then we must sow. We cannot hope for a harvest if we have not labored for it. All this is true with regard to the work of the Church. Look up a very solemn verse – **Judges 5:23**. Could it be true of us that we do not come to help the Lord against the mighty? When there is such need for dedicated workers are we lazy and idle?

5. As WORKMEN, we are to be skilled in using our tools (v. 15)
Our tool is the Word of Truth, and in order to be "**approved**" we must be able to handle the Word of God correctly. The all-important thing is our right attitude toward the Bible. There are three rules that we should adopt with regard to our Bible reading and Bible study. We must always:

(1) *Look it up* – search the Scriptures (**John 5:39**)
(2) *Let it in* – let the Word into our hearts and lives (**Colossians 3:16**)
(3) *Live it out* – put into practice the truth we receive (**Titus 2:10**)

If we are to be workmen who do not "**need to be ashamed**", we must do this regularly and diligently. Only then will we be qualified to serve God effectively.

6. As VESSELS, we must be clean and ready to be used (vv. 20-21)
In a large house there are many kinds of vessels – some for drinking, some for cooking, some for more noble uses than others, some made of gold, some of silver and some of clay. All this is true in the Church, but all of the articles, whether they are of gold or only of clay, must be clean and available for the Master to use. This is what Paul is saying here, and it is these two things that he is stressing about vessels: *first*, they must be available; *second*, they must be clean. If God is going to use us, we must be at His disposal, but more than that, we must be clean, for the Lord never uses unclean articles. Notice in **v. 21** that we have to do this cleansing ourselves – "**If a man cleanses himself…**" This is what **2 Corinthians 7:1** tells us. From what must we cleanse ourselves? One answer to this is given in **vv. 22-26**.

7. As SERVANTS, we must be kind, patient and helpful (vv. 24-25)
The Lord's servant must not quarrel. We must be a people of peace and not a contentious people. The wise Christian worker will certainly do all in his power to avoid controversies (**v. 23**) which only breed quarrels. The Lord's servant must learn the Lord's way, which was to be gentle (**2 Corinthians 10:1**) while being righteous (**Matthew 5:6**; **1 John 3:7**). In short, we are called to both be and do simultaneously.

- **Conclusion:** Am I being and doing what pleases the Lord?

Reverend Tony Raker
Grace Evangelical Free Church, 718 E. Queen Street, Strasburg, VA 22657
tonyraker@yahoo.com / www.graceevfreechurchva.org