

## **BE STRONG IN GRACE (2 TIMOTHY 2)**

When reading or studying the Bible, that is the Word of God, as it was taught and stressed to me, I therefore make it a point to mention and strongly emphasize to others as well, the Holy Scriptures should not be taken out of context to make it say what we want it to say. The Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, that we are greatly blessed to have, is one beautiful and intricately woven together picture of God's redemptive plan for mankind. As Timothy was warned and informed by the Apostle Paul in **chapter 3** of his epistle to him, he said, "But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. [Paul was referring to the Tanakh, the Torah (The Pentateuch), Nevi'im (Prophets), Ketuvim (Scriptures)- the Old Testament. Yet, now for us we also have the writings of the Apostles of Christ Jesus, which gives us the New Testament] All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be **complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**" (2 Timothy 3:13-17) There is absolutely nothing more important for you to have than the WORD OF GOD! The "Word of God" has a two-fold meaning for us. The Word is the inspired by God and written Word of what God our Creator wants us to know about Himself and His plan and purpose for His creation and in how we then respond to Him accordingly, and then, in the words of the Apostle John, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14). Logos, the Word. When Jesus was asked by the centurion to heal his servant, he said to Jesus, "but speak the word [logos] only and my servant will be healed" (Matthew 8:8) Jesus marveled then at that man's faith. What he was saying by faith is what is now written for us, in God's Word, that God "has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and **upholding all things by the word of His power**, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." (Hebrews 1:2-4)

The Word of God then always complements the Word of God, makes up a whole, or brings to perfection.<sup>1</sup> We can make the Bible say, that according to a passage of Scripture taken out of context, that we just believe on Christ Jesus and then we can go about our merry way believing that we are "saved". Yet the Apostle John tells us, "But as many as **received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wordnik.com/words/complement>

God, to those who **believe** in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (**John 1:12-13**) What did Jesus say about that? In talking to the Jewish ruler Nicodemus He told him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (**John 3:3**) He followed that up with, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (**John 3:5**) That ties in then with what Jesus told His disciples, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever." (**John 14:15-16**) While Jesus may have been speaking about the promise of the pouring out of God's Spirit that would come on the day of Pentecost, He is also speaking of the need for having a heart of repentance and a willingness of obedience. Right after that Jesus continued, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?" Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me." (**John 14:21-24**) The Apostle Peter spoke of the need for one's obedience to God by saying, "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him." (**Acts 5:32**) The fullness of Jesus' Word was summed up in what He said was the Great Commandment of God's and the second that is like it. To love God with all of one's heart, soul, strength, and mind and then to also love your neighbor as yourself. (**Mark 12:30-31**) Our response is according to the love of God (**John 3:16-17**) is to then love Him and others.

We can also make the Bible say for us that God wants us all to be rich and prosperous financially or that if one has troubles in their life then they probably aren't doing what God wants them to do. We can even get caught up in trying to follow the letter of the law given to Moses, according to the Old Covenant between God and the Israelites, thinking, "if I do it all, surely God's favor will be upon me". Yet, the whole of the Word of God, as beautiful and marvelous as it is, is given to us so that we may know God, our Creator, the Creator of all things, put our trust in Him, and honor Him with our lives, in all that we say and do. It really becomes a matter of where is our heart and focus. On ourselves or on God and His Word. The stories we can read about are not just for our entertainment or for our knowledge of history, but are for our understanding to Who God, our Creator, the One who reigns over all of His creation, and then of what He expects of each of us, as we are His creation. Now as it is written in **Colossians 1:16**, "For by Him

**all things** were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. **All things** were created through Him and for Him." Who is "Him"? Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord! Yes, Savior and Lord! The Apostle Paul said, "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the **heart one believes unto righteousness**, and with the **mouth confession is made unto salvation**." (**Romans 10:9-10**) Yet it is not just a matter of "believing" or "confessing". "Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous." (**1 John 3:7**) "In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother." (**1 John 3:10**) I am not talking about earning your way to salvation through works. Once again, Paul breaks it down for us, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (**Ephesians 2:8-10**) We are being led by the Holy Spirit to recognize our need of forgiveness from God for our sins against Him, acknowledging that God provided His Way, Christ Jesus, as He taught us His Way, as He died on a cross for our sins, taking our sins upon Himself, and He conquered sin, death, and evil, and made a way for us too to overcome death, sin, and evil, and we are then being led by the Holy Spirit to repent of our sins, call upon Jesus for His forgiveness, and to receive His Spirit, the Holy Spirit to become a child of God, which means we are then His, according to the New Covenant that we have in Christ Jesus, which means we forsake the sinning against God and live according to and in His Righteousness. One last thing I'll mention before we look at **2 Timothy 2**. I mentioned already Jesus speaking of the Great Commandment of God's and the second that is like it, loving God with all that is in us and loving others. Jesus also gave His Great Commission to His disciples, of which has been passed along to us. Jesus told them, "**All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.**" (**Matthew 28:18-20**) Combining the Great Commandments with the Great Commission gives us the phrase that we are "sharing and showing the love and the gospel of Christ Jesus". Therefore, everything that God provides, even if it is just a scrap of bread, is for the furtherance of Him using us in building His eternal kingdom, for His glory and praise!

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[**2 Timothy 2:1**] You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

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[How can one be strong in the grace in Christ Jesus? First, we are putting our trust in Him, wholeheartedly! "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (**Proverbs 3:5-6**) As King David professed in **Psalms 18:1-3**, "I will love You, O Lord, my **Strength**. The Lord is my **Rock** and my **Fortress** and my **Deliverer**; my God, my **Strength**, in whom I will trust; my **Shield** and the **Horn** of my salvation, my **Stronghold**. **I will call upon the Lord**, who is worthy to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies." That trust becomes us as we abide in the Word, abide in Christ. Jesus gave an illustration for us saying, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (**John 15:4-5**)]

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[**2 Timothy 2:2-3**] And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. [The Great Commission] You therefore must **endure hardship** as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

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[Tomorrow we'll be looking at how Jesus is the Commander of the Lord's army and presently we are in a spiritual battle, not against flesh and blood but against spirits of darkness and evil. (**Ephesians 6:12**) Paul said in the next chapter, "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." (**2 Timothy 3:12**) Not only that we will suffer persecution, Paul explained to the folks at Philippi what it means to be surrendered to Christ Jesus. "Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the **knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord**, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found **in Him**, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through **faith in Christ**, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may **know Him and the power of His resurrection**, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead." (**Philippians 3:8-11**)]

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[**2 Timothy 2:4-13**] No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops. Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they

also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. This is a faithful saying: 'For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. [Jesus gave an illustration to that saying, "**Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.**" **John 12:24**] If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

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I have always thought of that "If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself", to mean that in our times of doubt and confusion that He will remain faithful to us as His children. To a point that is true as we all have to start somewhere in doubt and having a lack of faith, yet overwhelmingly, commentaries that I read concerning that passage, say that as God's Word tells us "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (**Hebrews 11:6**) The consensus then is, on the being faithless, that God will remain true to His Word, for He cannot disown Himself or His Word.

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**[2 Timothy 2:14 (Approved and Disapproved Workers)]** Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing [othotomeo-cut straight (to the point)] the word of truth. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "**The Lord knows those who are His,**" and, "**Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.**" [that is true repentance] But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace [fruit of the Spirit-**Gal. 5:22-23**] with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, [as Jesus said, "**If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**" (**John 8:31-32**)] and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will. [Be strong in grace-abide in Him and His Word]