

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

These notes are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye, mistakes can possibly be found. Therefore, he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at pastorpat@waukeshabile.org.

Date: April 29, 2018

Sermon Title: Guard the Gospel

Sermon Series: Second Timothy

Text: 2 Tim. 2:1-13

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Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in **the Storyline of the Bible**. She is determined by design to have a **God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching** focused on personal **discipleship** through intentional and systematic instruction; a **Global-impacting mission** that resolves to be a **church planting church**; and a **Grace-based fellowship** where disciples are invited to live under a **reigning grace** characterized by a **Gospel-driven sanctification** that celebrates a divine **monergism** to the Christian life.

Date: April 29, 2018
Title: Guarding the Gospel
Text: 2 Tim. 2:1ff
Theme: There is a responsibility entrusted to us to stay faithful to the gospel for the sake of the elect.

Introduction:

Historical Context:

- The Church in Ephesus is under siege by false teachers/teaching.
- Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to perpetuate, protect, and proclaim the gospel.
- Paul is about to die and seeks to encourage Timothy to stay the course and thus suffer for the sake of the gospel.

Literary Context:¹

Do not be ashamed / examples of denial and devotion (1:8-18)

In our previous paragraph, Paul calls Timothy to openly identify with the Gospel. Such an alliance inevitably brings suffering and persecution. However, when we confess the gospel publically, Jesus assures those who confess that he will confess them before his Father (Mark 8:34-38; Matt. 10:32, 33).

He leaves off his call to identify with the gospel with another charge and that is to follow after and guard the gospel. This chapter shows us the effort it will take to follow after and guard the gospel.

Our next paragraph will show a picture of contrasts between those who openly confess Jesus as Lord and Savior and those who reject Jesus as Lord and Savior.

But before we move any further into the next text, let us consider our own passage. We will begin in verse 1 and work through to verse 13.

OUR TEXT (chap. 2)

The Apostasy of our Age (3:1-9)

The Antidote for our Age - the Word of God (3:10-16)

BIG PICTURE:

- Our Obligation - Pictures of faithfulness - An Unstoppable Grace (v. 1) - the earmarks of gospel ministers/ministry (vv. 1-7)
- Our Motivation - Principles for faithfulness (vv. 8-13) - An Unhindered Gospel (v. 9)
- Our Separation - Patterns to faithfulness - An Unashamed Worker - the contrast between honorable and dishonorable vessels (vv. 14-26).²

Outline:

I. Our Obligation - Pictures of faithfulness – An Unstoppable Grace (v. 1) - the earmarks of gospel ministers/ministry (vv. 1-7)

A. The Principle - Parent/child transfer / perpetuity (vv. 1, 2);

How are we to guard the gospel? We continue confessing and make sure this moves forward by the principle stated in verses 1 and 2.

What does this look like?

B. The Picture

1. A single-minded Soldier/singleness of mind (vv. 3, 4);

“The life of a Roman Legionnaire was anything but easy. They usually enlisted at the age of 19 to 20 and were bound to serve for 20 years. Theirs was a difficult existence. They marched 25 miles a day in formation, then when they stopped for the night, they would build a camp. The camp consisted of a 12 foot earthen wall and a 12 foot mote all the way around it. The average legion had nearly 6000 men in it so the camp would have been massive. It had with wooden gates and streets marked out, with tents and campfires. The next morning, after bread and water for breakfast they would burn the camp and set out on their march again, only to build another camp after another 25 miles. This was their daily existence. This was what they endured for the sake of the earthly kingdom of Rome.

As Paul writes this letter to Timothy, he is chained to one of these Roman soldiers. No doubt the difficulties they endured for Rome served to remind him of the difficulties we should endure for the sake of the kingdom of God. It is within this context that Paul writes to Timothy.”³

“Paul does not see secular activities as being out of bounds but is warning Timothy not to allow anything (even perhaps things that could be considered ‘spiritual’) to distract him from his task.”⁴

2. A rule abiding Athlete / rules (v. 5);

3. A hard working Farmer / participation / reward (v. 6). All have suffering involved.

What is the promise extended to those who die confessing?

C. The Promise

The Picture	The Promise
A single-minded soldier	Please him who called you
A rule abiding athlete	Crowned
A hard working farmer	Share in the crop
If we endure	We will reign with him (v. 12 [i.e. Adam and Eve])

- If you are going to be faithful to the gospel, this is the kind of character needed.
- It appears to expand on the type of person Onesiphorus is (1:15-18).
- Here are the type of people you need to identify for the perpetuation, proclamation, and protection of the gospel.
- We have been entrusted with the gospel; we are now obligated to train the next generation of gospel rich people.
- Paul was entrusted with the gospel (1:12). The same was entrusted to Timothy (1:14). Timothy in turn is to identify those to whom he can entrust the gospel who will be able to entrust it to others (2:4).
- The power behind perseverance and guarding the gospel is the Holy Spirit (1:7, 14; 2:1).

The reward lies in finishing. It is not how well you begin, but how well you finish. If we are to follow the pattern set before us in the apostle Paul and if we are going to guard what has been entrusted to us, then three characteristics will show themselves. As confessors of Jesus, he will confess us. This confession on our part will incur suffering. That is part of the “reward.”

Just as Adam and Eve were given responsibility over the Garden of Eden, so shall those who overcome rule and reign in the Garden of God described in Revelation 21 and 22.

II. Our Motivation - Principles for faithfulness (vv. 8-13) – An Unhindered Gospel (v. 9)

“Paul continues the thought of vv. 1-7 by rooting his exhortation in the realities of the gospel (cf. 1:9-11).”⁵

There is a positive side to our continued reliance on and identification with the Gospel, with Jesus. Paul offers us four reasons or motives for confessing Jesus in the face of adversity and opposition.

A. Remember Jesus Christ (v. 8)

Jesus himself died and rose again the third day. His resurrection from death insures us of our ultimate victory over sin and death.

“Remember Jesus Christ call for the remembrance of two things: first, Jesus was risen from the dead, and second, he was the offspring of David. Jesus aligns with risen from the dead, the victory over sin that secures our salvation. Christ aligns with offspring of David, a reminder of Christ’s Davidic lineage in accord with God’s promise and long-prophesied plan. By remembering Jesus’ resurrection, we recall the gospel’s awesome power. By remembering Christ’s messiahship, we recall God’s awesome faithfulness, fulfilling all the Scriptures and honoring the Davidic covenant.”⁶

B. Although we are bound, the word of God is not bound (v. 9).

C. Our suffering has significance in the salvation of the elect (v. 10)

“In order to arouse the courage of faith, Paul has been directing attention to the resurrection of Christ and to His own example; he now proceeds, in a series of short antithetical clauses, to set forth the relation between our conduct here and our condition hereafter.”⁷

D. If we endure, we will reign with him (v. 12)

The answer to the perplexing paradigm is found in the charge not to be ashamed and a willingness to suffer for the sake of the gospel (vv. 11-13). The reward for enduring / denial (vv. 11-13). Tie this with 1:15-18. See also 2:17; 3:8; 4:10, 14 as examples of those who have denied Jesus.

Those who deny are apostate and until and unless they repent they will perish in hell forever.

“The faithfulness of the Lord is shown in the realization of His decree – both in acknowledging and in rejecting; the context preceding shows that the latter reference predominates.”⁸

“If we deny with the mouth. If we do not believe, viz. with the heart, follows in the next verse. The denial is put first, for it extinguishes the faith which had previously existed.”⁹

“There is a world of difference between being blown off the ship’s deck by a hurricane and voluntarily diving into the sea to avoid having to stay at the helm.”¹⁰

“Those who have understood these words as containing soothing, comforting voices for the sinner, for the faithless Christian who has left his first love, are gravely mistaken. The passage is one of distinct severity – may even be termed one of the sternest in the Book of Life; for it tells how it is impossible even for the pitiful Redeemer to forgive in the future life. ‘He cannot deny Himself’ – cannot treat the faithless as though he were faithful – cannot act as though faithfulness and faithlessness were one and the same thing. The Christian teacher, such as Timothy, and the members of his flock likewise, must remember that, sure and certain as are the promises of glory and happiness to those who love the Lord and try to live His life, so surely will fall the chastisement on all who are faithless and untrue.”¹¹

Because of the parallelism of our text, I would couple the first two statements together and the last two statements together. The parallelism enforces the same thing through repetition. Who are those who died and who endure? They are believers. Who are those who deny and who are faithless? They are unbelievers. Who are believers? Believers are those who confess with their mouths the Lord Jesus and believe in their hearts that God has raised him from the dead. Who are the unbelievers? Unbelievers are those who do not confess and who do not believe in Jesus.

“If/Since” – the condition	“Then” – the consequence
<i>The Positive [confessors/believers]</i>	
¹¹ It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him,	we will also live with Him;
¹² If we endure,	we will also reign with Him;
<i>The Negative [deniers/unbelievers]</i>	
If we deny Him,	He also will deny us;
¹³ If we are faithless,	He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

Author’s Strategies:

There is a continued emphasis on denying (2:12, 13) and ashamed (2:15).

“Deny” [**arneomai**] 2 Tim. 2:12, 13; 3:5; 1 Tim. 5:8; Titus 1:16; 2:12

- It is the same word used in Matthew 10:28-42.

“Ashamed” [**anepaischuntos**] hypox in 2 Tim. 2:15.

“Ashamed” [**epaischunomai**] 2 Tim. 1:8, 12, 16.

- It is the same word used in Mark 8:34-38.

Shepherding the Sheep [What is the Next Step?]

- To the believing: Jesus is the reward given to those who confess him.
- To the unbelieving: Only in Jesus does one find salvation leading to eternal glory (v. 10). Separation from Jesus is the judgment on those who deny him.

¹ So far, the letter has exhorted Timothy to learn from Paul’s example in suffering (see the commentary on last Sunday’s reading), from others in their faithfulness or lack of it (see 2 Timothy 1:15-18), and from common examples of people who practice single-minded commitment, discipline, and hard work (see 2 Timothy 2:1-7). http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1835

² The letter begins a new movement in 2 Timothy 2:14 (extending through 3:9), making the lectionary’s addition of 2:14-15 perplexing. Whatever the reason for including these verses, they give a quick taste of what the letter expects Timothy to do as a Christian leader; for in this section Timothy receives instruction about teaching others so he might counteract those who “oppose the truth” (see 2 Timothy 3:8).

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1835

2:14 brings us back to the immediate issue. The leaders are not to be distracted by arguments with people like Hymanaeus and Philetus (2:17), who appear to have been carried away from a kind of spirituality which in the author’s view distracts from the heart of the gospel and its hope. Every generation knows of disputes which have the potential to displace the central urgent issues of the good news. Some of them are, in any case, seen in clearer perspective when we are clearer about the heart of the gospel.

The right way of leadership, according to 2:15 includes the right way to interpret scripture. In the tradition of Paul this is not in parroting its commands and prohibitions. On the contrary, to the ire of Paul’s opponents, it was sorting out what is central and what is not, what remains applicable and what is to be discarded in the interests of the radically inclusive message of grace. It got Paul into deep trouble with those whom we might call the fundamentalists of his day, who refused to contemplate that the word could be rightly discerned and and

critically engaged in this way. Paul tells us of his struggles even with leaders like Peter (see Gal 2:11-14).

<http://wwwstaff.murdoch.edu.au/~loader/CEpPentecost21.htm>

³ <https://www.lifeway.com/en/articles/sermon-gospel-unchained-approved-worker-2-timothy-2>

⁴ ESV Study Bible on 2 Timothy 2:4.

⁵ ESV Study Bible on 2 Timothy 2:8.

⁶ Gospel Transformation Bible on 2 Timothy 2:1.

⁷ Meyer's NT Commentary on 2 Tim. 2:11-13.

⁸ Meyer's NT Commentary on 2 Tim. 2:11-13.

⁹ Bengel's Gnomon on 2 Timothy 2:12.

¹⁰ N.T. Wright, Paul for Everyone: The Pastoral letters, 104.

¹¹ Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers on 2 Tim. 2:13.