

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 296 – October 23rd – 2 Timothy 2:1-19

Works frequently referenced in these notes on 2 Timothy

Mounce, William D

Word Biblical Commentary Vol 46: Pastoral Epistles, Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 2000

Stott, John R W

Guard the Gospel: The message of 2 Timothy, London, IVP, 1973**2 Timothy 2:1**

Σὺ οὖν, τέκνον μου, ἐνδυναμοῦ ἐν τῇ χάριτι τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ,

σου οὖν is emphatic – in contrast to Phygelus and Hermogenes.

τέκνον, ου n child; pl descendants
 ἐνδυναμοῦ Verb, pres pass imperat, 2 s
 ἐνδυναμοῶ strengthen; pass become strong

The present tense has continuous force. "Paul is speaking here of a daily empowerment (cf. Rom 4:20; Eph 6:10; Phil 4:13), an ongoing strengthening required to carry out the commands in chap 1 (cf. 1 Tim 4:6 for the same idea." Mounce.

Verse 2

καὶ ἃ ἤκουσας παρ' ἐμοῦ διὰ πολλῶν μαρτύρων, ταῦτα παράθου πιστοῖς ἀνθρώποις, οἵτινες ἱκανοὶ ἔσονται καὶ ἐτέρους διδάξαι.

πολυσ, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου much, many

μαρτυς, μαρτυρος m witness

The gospel is widely and publicly attested. Mounce thinks the witnesses are the many Christians who have also come to believe through the message Paul preached.

παράθου Verb, 2 aor midd imperat, 2 s
 παρατιθημι place before, midd.
 commit, entrust

πιστος, η, ον faithful, trustworthy, believing
 οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἥτις, ὅ τι who, which

ἱκανος, η, ον sufficient, fit, able
 ἔσονται Verb, fut indic, 3 pl εἰμι
 ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different
 διδασκῶ teach

'Train the trainers' is no new idea, it was Paul's method of ensuring that the work of the Gospel continued and expanded. It is the only means of supporting sustained growth.

Mounce emphasises that the verse needs to be understood in its historical setting. "Paul is nearing the end of his life and wants Timothy to leave Ephesus, even before his work is done, so Paul can see Timothy one last time (4:9). In order to continue the work that Timothy began, it is essential that men of character continue to teach the true gospel, the same gospel Timothy learned from Paul. Timothy is to identify these men and entrust the gospel to them before he leaves, helping to ensure the integrity of the gospel message... Because teaching is the responsibility of the elders (cf. 1 Tim 3:2), the faithful men are probably elders."

Carson, Moo and Morris, in *An Introduction to the New Testament*, write, "There is a 'given' about the Christian faith; it is something inherited from the very beginning of God's action for our salvation, and it is to be passed on as long as this world lasts. Paul is not arguing that believers should be insensitive to currents of thought and action in the world about them, nor is he saying that the Christian is a kind of antiquarian, interested in antiquity for its own sake. He is saying that there is that about the essence of the Christian faith that is not open to negotiation. God has said and done certain things, and Christians must stand by those things whatever the cost."

Verses 3-6

The metaphors of vv 3-6 are used also in 1 Cor 9:7, 10, though to illustrate a rather different point.

Verse 3

συγκακοπάθησον ὡς καλὸς στρατιώτης Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ.

συγκακοπάθησον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s
 συγκακοπαθεω see 1:8
 καλος, η, ον good, right, proper, fine
 στρατιωτης, ου m soldier

Verse 4

οὐδείς στρατευόμενος ἐμπλέκεται ταῖς τοῦ βίου πραγματείαις, ἵνα τῷ στρατολογήσαντι ἀρέσῃ·

οὐδείς, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν no one, nothing
στρατευομαι serve as a soldier, wage war,
do battle

ἐμπλεκομαι be mixed up in or involved in

The verb "is used outside the NT in describing a sheep or hare being tangled in thorns ... which creates a helpful picture for understanding this passage." Mounce.

βιος, ου m life, living, possessions
πραγματεια, ων f affairs, pursuits
στρατολογήσαντι Verb, aor act ptc, m dat s
στρατολογεω enlist soldiers
ἀρεσκω please, seek to please

"A good soldier (v 3) is single-minded, concentrating on his military task and hence not becoming involved in day-to-day civilian affairs. This single-mindedness is one way in which Timothy is called to suffer... The metaphor is a call to perseverance." Mounce

Verse 5

ἐὰν δὲ καὶ ἀθλήῃ τις, οὐ στεφανοῦται ἐὰν μὴ νομίμως ἀθλήσῃ·

ἐαν if, even if, though
ἀθλεω compete (in an athletic contest)

Cf. 1 Tim 1:18; 4:7; 6:12; 2 Tim 4:7; 1 Cor 9:24-27. "Just as an athlete perseveres despite the suffering involved in training and competition, so also Timothy should willingly suffer." Mounce.

στεφανωω crown; reward

"Elsewhere Paul speaks of pursuing not a perishable but rather an imperishable wreath (1 Cor 9:25), and later in this epistle Paul writes of the crown of righteousness (4:8) he will receive." Mounce

ἐαν μη except, unless
νομίμως lawfully, according to the rules

"Can mean competing in the actual contest according to the rules. It can also mean that athletes must properly prepare for the contest, reflecting the Greek rule that called for ten months of preparation before the games." Mounce

Verse 6

τὸν κοπιῶντα γεωργὸν δεῖ πρῶτον τῶν καρπῶν μεταλαμβάνειν.

κοπιαω work, work hard

"God's call on Timothy's life and his willingness to suffer involve strenuous toil." Mounce

γεωργος, ου m farmer, vinedresser
δει impersonal verb it is necessary, must
πρωτον i) adv. first; ii) equivalent to prep
with gen before

καρπος, ου m fruit, grain, harvest
μεταλαμβανω receive, share in, have

Verse 7

νόει ὃ λέγω· δώσει γάρ σοι ὁ κύριος σύνεσιν ἐν πᾶσιν.

νοεω understand, perceive, discern,
consider

Mounce suggests the sense here is 'reflect on.' "Paul recognises that the significance of the preceding three metaphors may not be fully apparent to Timothy so he urges him to reflect, to mull over, what he says." Lock paraphrases, "Think over the way in which this applies to you."

συνεσις, εως f understanding, insight

Verse 8

Μνημόνευε Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐγγεγερμένον ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ, κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου·

μνημονευω remember, keep in mind
ἐγγεγερμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc s

ἐγειρω raise
νεκρος, α, ον dead

"Timothy was to take courage by dwelling on the victory over death and the glory of his Master." Ellicott.

σπερμα, τος n seed, offspring

Cf. Rom 1:3-4. That Jesus was the Messiah, descended from David, formed a fundamental element of the apostolic kerygma.

Verse 9

ἐν ᾧ κακοπαθῶ μέχρι δεσμῶν ὡς κακοῦργος· ἀλλὰ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ οὐ δέδεται·

κακοπαθεω suffer, undergo hardship
μεχρι and μεχρις prep with gen until, to, to the extent, as far as
δεσμος, ου m (& n) bond, chain,
imprisonment

κακουργος, ου m (serious) criminal

Occurs elsewhere only of the criminals crucified with Jesus (Lk 23:32, 33, 39).

δέδεται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s δεω bind, tie

"Though the world may bind and persecute ministers of the Gospel, it can never bind or restrain the Gospel itself." Calvin.

Though Paul has been greatly used in the expansion of Christianity, the work will continue without him. Mounce thinks that Paul may also mean that, despite his chains, he continues to have opportunity to testify of Christ and that he may even be able to proclaim the gospel before Caesar.

Verse 10

διὰ τοῦτο πάντα ὑπομένω διὰ τοὺς ἐκλεκτούς, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ σωτηρίας τύχωσιν τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ μετὰ δόξης αἰωνίου.

ὑπομενω endure, remain behind
ἐκλεκτος, η, ον chosen

An implied call for Timothy also to endure.

σωτηρια, ας f salvation
τύχωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl τυγχανω
obtain, receive

The sense here is eschatological.

δόξα, ης f glory
αἰώνιος, ον eternal, everlasting

Verse 11

πιστὸς ὁ λόγος· εἰ γὰρ συναπεθάνομεν, καὶ συζήσομεν·

πιστος, η, ον faithful, trustworthy, reliable,
believing

The fifth and last of Paul's 'faithful sayings.'
Cf. 1 Tim 1:12-17.

Verses 11b-13 may be a fragment of a primitive Christian hymn – though the content and language (especially συν- verbs), is thoroughly Pauline.

συναπεθάνομεν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl
συναποθνήσκω die together (with)

Cf. Rom 6:8.

συζαω live with, live together

Paul's words may here reflect the fact that he may soon have to face death for the sake of the Gospel. However, Mounce argues that there is a strong parallel with Romans 6, where future tenses are used of the present life of the believer (either because future from the perspective of baptism or true futures but with the eschatological reflected back into the current life of the believer). In the light of this parallel Paul "calls Timothy to think back to his conversion/baptism experience and how it should affect his present life." This phrase and the first half of v 12 then form a sequence rather than parallel thoughts.

Verse 12

εἰ ὑπομένομεν, καὶ συμβασιλεύσομεν· εἰ ἀρνησόμεθα, κάκεινος ἀρνήσεται ἡμᾶς·

ὑπομενω see v.10

συμβασιλευω reign with

Only here and 1 Cor 4:8.

ἀρνεομαι deny, disown, renounce
κάκεινος, η, ο contraction of και ἐκεινος and
he, that one also, he also

Cf. Matt 10:33. This line of the 'saying' is a warning against apostasy. "In its historical context it is a warning to the Ephesians, especially Hymenaeus, Philetus (2:17), and possibly the deserting Asians (1:15), that their apostasy has serious consequences." Mounce.

Verse 13

εἰ ἀπιστοῦμεν, ἐκεῖνος πιστὸς μένει· ἀρνήσασθαι ἐαυτὸν οὐ δύναται.

ἀπιστεω fail or refuse to believe; prove or
be unfaithful

ἐκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that
(person/one), he, she, it

πιστος, η, ον faithful, trustworthy, reliable,
believing

The first half of the verse may be understood in one of two ways:

- i) A continuation of the warning of verse 12 (so Lock). Christ is acting faithfully when he denies those who deny him. The thought may reflect that of God's covenant faithfulness in executing the judgments of the covenant as well as the blessings.
- ii) The thought is quite separate from v 12 and is one of promise. Though at times we act in a faithless manner yet Christ remains faithful in his care of us.

Most commentators think the second the more likely meaning. "Most see line 4 [of the cited hymn] as a promise of assurance to believers who have failed to endure (line 2) but not to the point of apostasy (line 3). Peter's denial of Christ (Matt 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:15-19) and his repentance and forgiveness (John 21:15-19) are often used as an illustration. This message was especially significant in the Ephesian context since their opposition to Paul entailed faithlessness to God. If Timothy was feeling defeated, it would also serve to encourage him." Mounce

ἀρνήσασθαι Verb, aor midd/dep infin
ἀρνεομαι

ἐαυτος, ἐαυτη, ἐαυτον him/her/itself
δυναμαι can, be able to, be capable of

"The moral impossibility of self-contradiction in God forms the basis of His faithfulness." Guthrie.

Lock sees this last phrase as Paul's added comment to the cited hymn.

2:14 ff

Paul now begins to address the specific situation at Ephesus and how Timothy should deal with it.

Verse 14

Ταῦτα ὑπομίμησκε, διαμαρτυρόμενος ἐνώπιον τοῦ κυρίου, μὴ λογομαχεῖν, ἐπ' οὐδὲν χρήσιμον, ἐπὶ καταστροφῇ τῶν ἀκουόντων.

ταυτα It is difficult to be certain of the reference – perhaps the things contained in the faithful saying of the previous verses.

ὑπομνησκω remind; recall to attention
διαμαρτυρομαι declare solemnly and emphatically, charge
ἐνώπιον prep with gen before, in the presence of

Many MSS read ἐνώπιον του κυριου. Metzger writes, "It is difficult to decide between ἐνώπιον του θεου and ἐνώπιον του κυριου, both of which are supported by weighty evidence. A majority of the committee preferred the former reading which is in harmony with 4:1 and 1 Tim 5:4 and 21."

λογομαχεω fight or quarrel about words

The verb occurs here only in the NT, but cf. 1 Tim 6:4 and Titus 3:9 for the cognate noun. The sense is 'to dispute about words, split hairs.' While Timothy must oppose the false teachers he is not to be drawn into playing their own game and to end up in profitless disputes.

οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing
χρησιμον, ου n good, value, profit
καταστροφη, ης f ruin, destruction

Verse 15

σπούδασον σεαυτὸν δόκιμον παραστήσαι τῷ θεῷ, ἐργάτην ἀνεπαίσχυντον, ὀρθοτομοῦντα τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας.

σπούδασον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s
σπουδαζω work hard at, be eager
σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun yourself
δοκιμος, ον approved, genuine, valued
παριστημι present, stand before
ἐργατης, ου m labourer, workman
ἀνεπαίσχυντος, ον with no need to be ashamed

Cf. Phil 1:20. "Timothy is to do his ministry such that he will not be ashamed of it, perhaps with the eschatological nuance of standing before God in the judgment." Mounce.

ὀρθοτομεω use or interpret correctly

The precise meaning of the verb is unclear. It occurs here only in the NT and means literally 'to cut straight.' It is used in non biblical Greek in connection with ὁδος 'to cut a straight path.' There are two basic views as to its meaning here:

- i) Right interpretation of the gospel;
 - ii) Right behaviour in line with the gospel.
- Mounce concludes, "Perhaps the rarity of ὀρθοτομειν should serve as a caution against making too precise a distinction between the two options, especially in light of the theme in the PE that right belief and right conduct go hand in hand. Treating the gospel correctly cannot stop at right belief but must move into right conduct, and in fact vv 16-18 discuss both behaviour and belief."

ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality

I.e. the gospel.

Verse 16

τὰς δὲ βεβήλους κενοφωνίας περιῦστασο· ἐπὶ πλεῖον γὰρ προκόψουσιν ἀσεβείας,

βεβηλος, ον vile, godless, irreligious
κενοφωνια, ας f foolish talk

βεβήλους κενοφωνίας cf. 1 Tim 6:20, 'godless chatter.' The meaning is much the same as λογομαχειν in v 14.

περιῦστασο Verb, pres midd imperat, 2 s
περιῦστημι avoid, keep clear of
πλεων, πλειον or πλεον more; ἐπι π.
further, more and more
προκοπτω advance, progress
ἀσεβεια, ας f godlessness, wickedness

"The opponents think they are progressive, advancing in their religion, but the only thing they are advancing in is ungodliness." Mounce. Cf. 3:9.

Verse 17

καὶ ὁ λόγος αὐτῶν ὡς γάγγραινα νομὴν ἔξει· ὧν ἔστιν Ὑμέναιος καὶ Φίλητος,

γαγγραινα, ης f gangrene, cancer

A medical term used of flesh-eating sores.

νομη, ης f spreading (v. ἔχω spread, eat away)

ἔξει Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ἔχω

"The false teachers are advancing in ungodliness, and their teaching is eating away at the spiritual flesh of the church." Mounce. We know nothing of these characters who were presumably leaders in false teaching. Hymenaeus is probably the same as is named with Alexander in 1 Tim 1:20 and excommunicated by Paul.

Verse 18

οἵτινες περὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἠστόχησαν, λέγοντες ἀνάστασιν ἤδη γεγενῆσθαι, καὶ ἀνατρέπουσιν τὴν τινῶν πίστιν.

This is one of the few places where the content of the heresy is specified.

οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἥτις, ὁ τι who, which
 ἀστοχεῶ (lit miss the mark) lose one's way, leave the way
 ἀναστασις, εως f resurrection, raising up
 ἤδη adv now, already
 γεγενῆσθαι Verb, perf act infin γινομαι

Cf. 1 Cor. 15. They may have taught that the only resurrection is a spiritual in which the believer is already raised up with Christ. The subtlety of their error lay in affirming and emphasising one aspect of Scripture truth (Ephesians 2:6) while denying another. "The preaching of the bodily resurrection is a central element in Paul's theology. To deny the bodily resurrection is to deny Christ's resurrection, and if Christ is not raised, then the gospel message is empty (1 Cor 15:12-17). To deny the resurrection is to deny the truth of the gospel. But the doctrine came under attack in Corinth (1 Cor 15:12) and elsewhere (2 Thess 2:1-2). Many suggest that Paul's teaching of spiritual death and rising to life (2 Tim 2:11; Rom 6:1-11; Col 2:20-3:4; cf. Eph 2:6; 5:14) has been perverted by replacing the bodily with the spiritual resurrection and hence denying the bodily resurrection... This perversion would have been strengthened by the prevailing philosophical dualism that saw material as evil – cf. the Athenian ridiculing dismissal of any notion of bodily resurrection (Acts 17:32) – and often resulted in asceticism or an indifference towards immorality." Mounce.

ἀνατρέπω overturn, bring ruin to
 πιστις, εως f faith, trust, belief

Verse 19

ὁ μέντοι στερεὸς θεμέλιος τοῦ θεοῦ ἔστηκεν, ἔχων τὴν σφραγίδα ταύτην· Ἔγνω κύριος τοὺς ὄντας αὐτοῦ, καὶ· Ἀποστήτω ἀπὸ ἀδικίας πᾶς ὁ ὀνομάζων τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου.

μέντοι but, nevertheless, however
 στερεος, α, ον firm
 θεμελιος, ου m (also θεμελιον, ου n)
 foundation, foundation stone

θεμελιος is here probably best understood as that which God has founded, namely the church.

ἔστηκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3s ἵστημι stand, stand firm
 σφραγις, ιδος f seal, mark, inscription

"The metaphor is based on the practice of inscribing a seal on the foundation of a building in order to indicate ownership and sometimes the function of the building (cf. the seal of the twelve disciples on the foundation of the new Jerusalem in Rev 21:14). The following two phrases specify what the seal actually says; it was common to have the seal contain a motto or short phrase." Mounce.

ἔγνω Verb, aor act indic, 3 s γινωσκω

The citation is from Numb 16:5 LXX. God has a perfect knowledge of those who are his own, unlike our fallible knowledge. But there is more here – God's knowledge includes:

- i) His sovereign choice of his own (Numb 16:5; 1 Peter 1:2; Rom 8:29), "It is God's prior knowledge in election that assures Timothy that despite the success of the opponents the elect are safe" Mounce;
- ii) His special love for his own (Nahum 1:7; John 10:14);
- iii) His secure hold on his own (John 10:27-30).

ἀποστήτω Verb, aor act imperat, 3 s
 ἀφισταμαι (dep in all forms but aorist)
 intrans leave, go away, keep away
 ἀδικια, ας f wrongdoing, evil, sin
 ὀνομαζω name, call
 ὄνομα, τος n name, person, authority

Note the parallel with Numbers 16:5,26 and the context there.

"The second statement on the seal is one of the most strongly worded demands in Scripture, that obedience to the ethical demands of the gospel are [sic] mandatory, not optional." Mounce. The promised security of the child of God leaves no room for complacency.