

Paul's Epistles to Individuals

Lesson 17 – 2 Timothy 2:7 – 19

I. Consider What I say (v. 7)

Whether verse 7 refers to the lessons taught in the previous verses, the discussion about to occur or a combination of both is not a certainty but in any case it is a significant statement. The admonition to consider (Gr. "noeo") means to "perceive with the mind, grasp the meaning of, think about, ponder, or to put your mind on". Just reading God's word is not enough. One should study it, ponder it so as to understand it. Paul had also told Timothy to "meditate" (KJV) and "persevere in these" things in **1 Tim. 4:16-17**, with the idea being similar. "The Lord will give you understanding in everything" indicates the reason for the consideration of these inspired directions. Understanding (Gr. "sunesis") means simply "comprehension" or "insight". There is no indication here of a miraculous action on Timothy. Understanding comes from consideration or study of the Word and not from within the man (**2 Cor. 10:12**). The maturation process is expected of God's people (**Heb. 5:11-14**).

II. Remember Christ (vs. 8-13)

The center of this discussion and the teaching is Christ. Instructed here to remember Him, the implication is to remember Him first. All things discussed are in this context.

A. Confirmation (v. 8)

Jesus here is confirmed as having been raised from the dead, the seed of David and confirmed by the Gospel. According to prophecy He would be an offspring of David (**Jer. 23:5-6, Rom. 1:3**) who would defeat death (**Psa. 16:10; Psa. 22; Isa. 53**). This is revealed to be true in the Gospel, not Paul's because it originated with him but because it was given to him with authority and he preached nothing contrary to it (**Gal. 1; 6-12**).

B. Why Paul Endures Suffering (vs. 9-10)

Paul's suffering as a prisoner is well documented. Here he explains that though he may be imprisoned, the Gospel cannot be chained. The word for criminal in v. 9 is only used one other time in the NT and that is referring to those crucified with Jesus (**Luke 23:32, 39**). Paul is making it clear he is being treated as a common criminal, not just a prisoner. Paul endures his mistreatment because he knows the Word of God cannot be contained. In spite of efforts by those in power, the Word has not and will not be stifled. He endures for the sake of Christians. To endure (Gr. "hupomeno") is to "bear up courageously". Those referred to in the NT as elect, chosen, or called are not those described by Calvinistic doctrines as being involuntarily selected but are those who are called by the Gospel (**2 Thes. 2:14**) and who obey it (**2 Thes. 1:8**). This is clear because here he states his suffering as being endured so that those who are chosen "may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus" (v. 10). Their obtaining that salvation is not certain but dependent upon their access to the Gospel. For that reason, Paul will endure whatever persecution comes his way, from Nero or anyone else.

C. The Trustworthy Statement (vs. 11-13)

Here there are three equivalencies and one contrast, all of which are an encouragement to Paul, Timothy and all other Christians. 1) Death=life, 2) Endurance=reward, 3) Denial=denial, and the contrast 4) faithlessness vs. faithfulness.

1. Dead to the world equals Spiritual life (**Gal. 2; Rom. 6:4; Eph. 2:5; 1 Cor. 15:22**).
2. To endure the difficulties of persecution is worth it (**Col. 3:24; Heb. 10:35**).

3. Denial results in denial. Those who deny God are disobedient and worthless in His cause (**Tit. 1:16**) and disobedience results in “*just recompense*” (**Heb. 2:2-3**).
4. Whether we remain faithful or not, God will always be faithful to his Word and promises (**Josh. 21:45; 2 Pet. 1:3-4; 2 Pet. 3:9**).

III. Therefore Remind Them to Be Faithful (vs. 14-19)

Reminders are necessary and commonly mentioned in the NT (**1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Pet. 1:12, 13; 2 Pet. 3:1-2**).

A. *Wrangling Over Words (v. 14)*

Paul warns to not argue over less than important things that can disrupt the confidence of brethren. Also see **1 Tim 1:4, 6:4-5**. Not every argument must be won. The church in Corinth had such sharp disagreements they were taking one another before civil authorities for solution. One principle revealed there is that in some cases, it is permissible and preferable to be wronged than to fight to the extreme (**1 Cor. 6:7**). Of course this is not regarding issues of sin but those matters of preference in which one man may differ from another. Sin must be identified and withstood, even if strife results as is illustrated in various comments made to Timothy by Paul.

B. *Study to Show Thyself Approved (v. 15)*

In the NASB and others the translation is to “give diligence” or “be diligent”. So here the idea is not limited to “study” as some translations suggest but it to use effort consistently (including study) so as to be a beneficial workman capable of accurately teaching the Word.

C. *Shun Vain Babblings (v. 16-18)*

As previously discussed, the empty and worldly chatter mentioned here is detrimental to the Faith, resulting in some going astray (**1 Tim. 1:9; 6:20**). Specifically here Paul mentions by name two who have gone astray, Hymenaeus and Philetus. This is probably the same Hymenaeus of **1 Tim. 1:20**. It is therefore important, as an inspired Paul sees fit to again warn, that it be avoided.

D. *Resurrection (v. 18)*

One example of vain babblings is the idea that the resurrection had already past. There is most certainly to be a physical resurrection (**1 Cor. 15; Rom. 6:4**) even though many throughout time has doubted it. It is a cornerstone of faith (**John 5:28-29; 6:44**) and if those who dispute it or successful in their efforts it can damage the confidence of some. Those who teach that “*have gone astray*” (**v. 18**).

E. *The Firm Foundation (v. 19)*

Paul contrasts the vacillating and inconsistent teachings of men with the unalterable standard of God. God will not change (**Mal. 3:6; James 1:17**) and neither will His Word (**1 Pet. 1:23; Jude 3**).

F. *The Lord Knows His Own (v. 19)*

The Lord knows his followers (**John 10:14**) because of their actions (**John 10:27**). They have abstained from wickedness and are recognizable as a result. We are to have no fellowship with the “*unfruitful works of darkness*” (**Eph. 5:6-11**).