

# General Study Of Letters To Timothy

## – Part 4

**2 Timothy 2:5-7** [NIV] *“Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor’s crown unless he competes according to the rules. The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this.”*

**As Timothy preached and taught, he would face suffering but he must endure.**

**Paul used a comparison with soldiers, athletes and farmers, all of whom must discipline themselves and be willing to sacrifice to achieve the results they aim for.**

Paul used these same word pictures in his letter to the Church in Corinth, [**1 Corinthians 9:7, 24-27**]. Like soldiers, Christians have to give up worldly security and endure rigorous discipline. Athletes must train hard and follow rules. Farmers work hard and are patient.

All such people keep going despite suffering because of the thought of victory, the vision of winning and the hope of a harvest.

**Paul reminds Timothy and all true Christians that God will give such dedicated people insight into His will for all human beings, which is expressed in His Word, the Christian Bible.**

**Genesis 1:26-27** [NIV] *“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”*

**Here we see the two-fold plan of God for all human beings.**

Understanding the meaning of the two Hebrew words used in these verses helps us to have insight into the great plan of God.

“*Image*” is the Hebrew word “*tselem*” meaning resemblance, shadow, material representation. This was all that was created in both male and female form.

“*Likeness*” is the Hebrew word “*demûwth*” meaning manner, attributes, character.

As we know, character can only be formed by spending time in the presence of the person whose character we wish to reflect. This is why the Eternal Creator God gives humans a period of time in which to become like Him in character, [**Galatians 5:22-25**] to enable Him to offer humans eternal life with Him, [**Romans 6:23; John 17:3**].

**John 6:66-68** [NIV] *“From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. ‘You do not want to leave too, do you?’ Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.’”*

The “*words of eternal life*” are recorded in God’s Word, the Christian Bible, and become a part of us as we read, study, meditate and obey them.

**2 Timothy 2:8-10** [NIV] *“Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God’s word is not chained. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.”*

**At the heart of false teaching is an incorrect view of Jesus Christ.**

**In Timothy's day many asserted that Jesus Christ was divine but never human.**

**Today many believe that Jesus Christ was human but not God, [for example, all who follow the religion of Islam.]**

**Either view destroys the good news that Jesus Christ brought to humanity from God the Father.**

That the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, frees us through our faith in His existence and life sacrifice from the penalty of our sins and be reconciled to the Eternal Creator God, [**1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21**].

**John 1:1-5, 14** [NIV] *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.” ... “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

**John gives us a clear picture of Jesus Christ in these verses.**

Paul was in prison because of the gospel message he preached.

**The truth about Jesus Christ is no more popular today than in Paul's day.**

When Paul said that Jesus Christ was God, he angered the Jew who had condemned Jesus Christ of blasphemy when He said that He and the Father were one, or introduced Himself with the words *“I am”* which is a title only given to God, [**John 8:58-59**].

**Paul angered the Romans who worshipped the emperor as God.**

Paul angered the Greeks who thought that divinity was soiled if it had any contact with humanity.

Yet people from all these background beliefs became Christians through his preaching of Jesus Christ, [**1 Corinthians 1:22-25; Philippians 4:22; Acts 11:20-21**].

When Paul says *“obtain the salvation”* he is not contradicting grace, for salvation is **not** something that can be earned, [**Ephesians 2:8-9**]. Paul is referring being faithful to the end of our physical life.

**2 Timothy 2:11-13** [NIV] *“Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us; if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.”*

These could be the words of one of the first hymns in the early Christian Church.

**God is faithful to His created children, and although we may suffer great hardships in this life, God promises that someday we will receive the gift of eternal life, within the created family [Kingdom] of God and share in the administration of that Kingdom.**

This truth comforted Paul as he went through suffering and faced death.

Every true faithful Christian can claim these promises that the Eternal God makes to human beings, [**Matthew 16:24-27; Matthew 19:28-30; Luke 22:28-30; Romans 5:17; Romans 6:8; Romans 8:10-11, 17; 1 Corinthians 15:42-58; Colossians 3:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 3:21; Revelation 21:4, 7; Revelation 22:12**].

**2 Timothy 2:14-18** [NIV] *“Keep reminding them of these things. Warn them before God against quarrelling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some.”*

Paul urged Timothy to remind the believers not to argue over unimportant details, [*“quarrelling about words”*] or have foolish discussions [*“godless chatter”*] for such are confusing, useless, and even harmful.

### **False teachers love to cause strife and divisions.**

Because God will examine what kind of workers we have been for Him, [**2 Corinthians 5:10**] we need to build our lives based on His Word, the Christian Bible, which tells us how to live our lives for Jesus Christ and serve Him by being an example to others, [**1 Peter 3:15-16**].

Paul had delivered Hymenaeus over to Satan because of his false teaching, [**1 Timothy 1:20**] and in this letter reminded Timothy of how he should deal with these false teachers who were causing some of the church to wander away from the truth.

### **We must never shape the doctrines found in God’s Word, the Christian Bible, to match our opinions.**

**2 Timothy 2:19** [NIV] *“Nevertheless, God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: ‘The Lord knows those who are his,’ and, ‘Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.’”*

False teachers still today distort the truth or dilute it, some even delete it, by replacing it with the teaching of certain “great” men of the past.

No matter how many people are blinded to the truth God’s Word, the Christian Bible, inspired by the Holy Spirit, [**2 Peter 1:20-21**] it is a solid foundation that never changes, is never shaken and will never fade. **When we follow God’s Truth, [John 17:11] He will never leave us.**

**2 Timothy 2:20-21** [NIV] *“In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.”*

Paul is urging Timothy to be the kind of person Jesus Christ could use for His noblest purposes. Do not settle for less than God’s best instrument that God can use in His created family, using to the full now the gifts He has given us through the active indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

**2 Timothy 2:22** [NIV] *“Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”*

Make sure that our life is progressing in the right direction away from all that is evil and pursuing a right relationship with our Creator Jesus Christ, allowing His character to be reflected in us, [**Galatians 5:22-25**] by an active presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

### **The goal of a Christian teacher or leader must include four attitudes of mind.**

**Righteousness** – the Greek word used is “*dikalōsunē*” which means equity of character, giving to God and also other human beings their due respect.

**Faith** – the Greek word “*pistis*” meaning persuasion, conviction, constancy, **not** just an emotional experience.

**Love** – the Greek word “*agapé*” a spontaneous affection or benevolence irrespective of the “*rights*” or response of the recipient, [**Romans 5:8**]. A sacrificial love, [**John 3:16-17**] that puts aside personal desires, [**Philippians 2:5-8**] to serve the object of that love.

**Peace** – the Greek word “*eirēnē*” meaning a harmonious relationship with other human beings, a state of quietness and rest.

All of these things are to be sought “*with those who call on the Lord.*”

**The Christian must never seek to live alone, detached and aloof from their fellow believers.**

The Christian must find their strength, joy, support in the Christian fellowship.

**2 Timothy 2:23-26** [NIV] “*Don’t have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.*”

As a teacher, as every Christian has been called to be, [**1 Peter 3:15-16**] to help people who are confused about the truth, Paul’s advice was that we should approach others in a kind and gentle way, patiently and courteously explaining the truth of why we have life, and what our Eternal Creator God expects us to accomplish as our part of our salvation from eternal death, [**Philippians 2:12-13**] by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us and in His presence causing us to gradually reflect the very character of the Eternal Creator God, [**Galatians 5:22-25**].

**The aim always that God will grant those we are teaching repentance which is one of the jobs of the Holy Spirit, [John 16:8].**

**Leading people into the truth, [John 17:17] is also a job of the Holy Spirit working through true Christians, [John 16:13].**