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Introduction: Alluding to the example of Onesiphorus at the end of Chapter 1, the conclusion Paul draws at the beginning of Chapter 2 is that Timothy should be *strong in grace* (â€œgraceâ€ here likely referring to the bestowing of strength that comes through Christ). *Knowing Christ is a great source of strength*; Paul himself affirmed this in 1:12 (â€œI know whom I have believedâ€). Furthermore, he should pass the ministry of teaching along to others who will perpetuate it by their own teaching. Herein we see a mission of the church: *train others to proclaim that very message of salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus to others*. Paul famously uses the examples of a soldier, and athlete, and a hardworking farmer to show Timothy how he must labor. The work of the Lord is hard work. It brings hardship and potential discouragement. It even divides people sometimes, very sadly. But Timothy needed to be committed to evangelism, discipleship, and enduring hard times as he worked those things. *Knowing Christ is the great source of strength to endure!* Itâ€™s more than just getting a ticket to heaven. It is knowing your Creator, walking with Him, serving Him, enjoying fellowship with Him. How well do you know Him? Be strong in His grace!

1. Verses 1-7 - Soldiers, athletes, and hardworking farmers: the serving Christian.

- v.1 - **be strong...** This is really the culmination of all that Chapter 1 was about. Paul knew Timothy was struggling, but he needed remain strong. Where was he to find that strength? In **Christ Jesus**. It is a gift from God to all those who walk *closely* with Christ.

- v.2 - Furthermore, not only was he to remain strong, but he was to train others for ministry, **faithful men**, i.e., *pastors* who would **teach others**. Inner strength from God would help him carry out his work.

- vv.3-4 - A **good soldier**: he **endures hardship**, and he is not trapped by the **burdens of this life**. That is, in the strength which God gives, Timothy must keep pressing on through hard times (like he was in) and not get distracted by earthly interests.

NOTE: Paul says not to get *entangled*. He is not advocating a monastic life, nor is he licensing Timothy to shirk earthly responsibilities. Do what you must do, but donâ€™t get caught up in it. Be organized, proactive, responsible. Stay on top of things. Be diligent. *Donâ€™t get entangled*.

- v.5 - The **athlete** must keep **the rules** if he expects to win. Part of the â€œrulesâ€ for Timothy: expect to suffer, use your gift thoroughly, be diligent, courageous, faithful. Above all, *know Christ*.

- v.6 - The **farmer** must be **hardworking** if he will reap a profit from his crops. The first farmer to market would make the most profit. He has to work hard in order to accomplish this. This verse should be read with the emphasis on the word, â€œhardworkingâ€. â€œThe HARDWORKING farmer must be first...â€ as opposed to the lazy farmer, who will not reap much, if anything.

- v.7 - Herein is a great snapshot of what Paul is encouraging Timothy for: his ministry required endurance, suffering, diligence, keeping the rules (so to speak), and lots of hard work. Now was not the time for discouragement. Be encouraged by the example of Onesiphorus, know Christ intimately, be strong and press on.

2. Verses 8-13 - The examples of Christ and of Paul: the enduring Christian

- v.8 - **Remember... Jesus Christ...** Jesus is the ultimate example of suffering and enduring hardship. The reference to **the seed of David** may harken back to what Paul wrote in 1:12a - he was suffering as a Jew who preached salvation through faith in Jesus to Gentiles, and here he affirms the "Jewishness" of the Lord Jesus. But the main point is to use Jesus' example of endurance to encourage Timothy. He suffered, but He was **raised from the dead**. Enduring for the Lord's sake is never in vain.

- v.9 - Paul also suffered, and that **as an evildoer** (that is, the world perceived Paul to be evil, just as it did Jesus). Here Paul also says why suffering is worth it: **the word of God is not chained** as he was, it continued to spread.

- v.10 - **Therefore...** conclusion: **I endure...** Christ set the example for Paul, thus Paul endured. He called Timothy to the same. Remember Jesus! It will encourage you! **...the elect** is likely a reference to those who had not come to faith yet but had been appointed to it (see Acts 13:48 for an illustration of that concept). And so Paul endures whatever comes his way for their **sake**. If he becomes ashamed or discouraged and silent, people will not hear. And if they do not hear, they cannot believe (Romans 10:14). If they do not believe, they will not **obtain... salvation**.

- vv.11-13 - **faithful saying...** trustworthy words. There are four "if-then" scenarios in what seems to be an early creed. The first two promise life and reign with Christ. The last two compare denial of Christ with faithlessness (the former being worse). The key here seems to be the second point of the creed, which deals with enduring. Paul reminds Timothy of a creed which highlights endurance in its words.