



“A Godly Leader’s Strength”

2 Timothy 2

Lesson 11

In A Nutshell

Weak leadership is a curse to any enterprise, but we live in a day that holds weakness in great esteem and strong leadership in great contempt, especially when it comes to spiritual things. This lesson will challenge you to develop spiritual strength and to seek to strengthen your godly leaders.

To The Testimony!

The Elements of Strong Leadership

2 Tim.
2:1
1:15-18

1. The chapter break at 2 Timothy 2 marks for us the beginning of Paul's emphasis on strength in Christian ministry, but his command to "be strong" is connected to the last part of the previous chapter by the word in 2:1, "therefore." What is the word *therefore* there for? Why does Paul tell Timothy that he needs to be strong?

2 Tim.
2:2

2. Paul expected Timothy to be strong, but he did not expect Timothy to be a perpetual loner. There is strength in numbers, and this verse tells us how those numbers are to be developed in the local church. How do the ministries of local churches grow according to this verse?

2 Tim.
2:3-7

Acts
6:2-4

3 John
9-11

3. Strength is a very practical virtue, and there are practical things that must be done in order to ensure strong spiritual leadership. In this passage Paul gives three illustrations that teach us an important principle about maintaining strong leadership in the local church. Complete the chart below listing the illustrations and the principles they teach.

Verse:	vv. 3-4	v. 5	v. 6
Illustration:			
How to maintain strong leadership:			

The Motivation of Strong Leaders

2 Tim.
2:8-10

4. Some would say that Paul did not have much to live for sitting in Nero's cell, awaiting gruesome execution. In this passage he states that he did, declaring, "Therefore, I endure" (v. 10). Here we see what motivated Paul to go on as a strong leader in trying circumstances. What motivated this strong leader?

From The Honeycomb

"The Faithful Saying (vv. 11-13)"

As Paul contemplates what keeps him going, he remembers a well-known verse. This may have been part of a hymn he sang with Silas in the Philippian jail, and which he still found himself singing in his Roman cell.

Whatever its origin, it was an encouragement to the apostle, and it becomes a part of infallible Holy Scripture as Paul recalls it under the inspiration of the Holy

Spirit in this epistle. A few translation points are important to our understanding of these verses however:

Some may think they are reading about a believer losing his salvation when they read, "if we deny him, he will deny us; if we believe not. . ." (vv. 12-13). But two things are clear in Greek, which are not as clear in the KJV. They will help us to see that this passage agrees with the doctrine of eternal security (Rom. 8:30).

1. The phrase "if we deny him" is different from the other phrases "if we be dead," "if we suffer," and "if we believe not." It is the only conditional phrase to use the future tense. We can show this difference by translating the four phrases in an expanded way to show how the Greeks would have interpreted the tenses used:

"If we died with Him (and we certainly did)"

"If we suffer (and we certainly do)"

"If we someday deny Him (and some shall)"

"If we are unfaithful (and we certainly are)".

Paul purposefully switched to the future tense in the third conditional phrase, because he did not want to indicate that all professing believers deny the Lord. Paul knew some who had, and he was sure others certainly would, but of those Jesus says, "I never knew you" (Matt. 7:20-23). Jesus does not say, "I knew you once, but now no longer." Those who once professed Christ publicly and later deny Him, were never really His to begin with in spite of their miracles and empty claims (1 John 2:19).

2. One more translation point is helpful here. You will notice above that we translate *believe not* with the word *unfaithful*. Paul uses a format that indicates that the condition is true--all believers ("we") do this, so the translation "believe not" is to be understood in the sense of faithlessness, not denying the faith. All Christians are unfaithful from time to time. No true Christian ultimately denies the faith. The phrase is a play on words with the following phrase, "He abideth faithful." The opposite of "faithful" is "unfaithful", not "believe not."

Hence, the verses agree with eternal security. Those who deny Christ in an ultimate sense were never really His. Jesus never knew them. And even when those who are His are unfaithful, like Peter's tragic denials, the Lord abides faithful. To be unfaithful to us would be to deny Himself, and He simply cannot do it.

2 Tim.
2:11-12

Luke
9:23

1 Cor.
15:31

5. How do the first two phrases of the faithful saying indicate that it is important for Christians to not get the proverbial cart before the horse spiritually? How should these phrases affect a Christian's sense of motivation?

The Work of Strong Leaders

2 Tim. 2:14-26 6. Usefulness is the key to this passage (vv. 20-21). Strong leaders have work to do, and this passage emphasizes being useful to God's work. Paul instructs Timothy about things that will make him useful, and things which will make him useless. Summarize this instruction by creating two lists. Under the heading "To Be Gold," list what Paul says makes Christians useful. Under the heading "To Be Wood," list what Paul says makes Christians useless.

To Be Gold:	To Be Wood:

Real Life?

County Baptist Church is situated in a mid-sized town with a congregation of about 150. Pastor Smith, who lives with his family in the home he bought 10 years ago on West Lane, has been with the church about 15 years. He draws a salary that enables him to pay his bills on time, afford Christian education for his kids, save for their college, and even prepare for his retirement. The church has had a number of assistants under Pastor Smith's tenure, and each one has grown under his care. Each one is still ministering in either County Baptist, a neighboring church they planted, or on the mission field supported by the church. The facilities of the church are modest but well cared for by the deacons and other men of the church.

City Baptist Church has a congregation of 300 with weekly offerings that resemble those of County Baptist. A few years back the church purchased a state-of-the-art facility complete with parsonage and gymnasium. Attendance took off, but the mortgage puts a heavy strain on the resources of the church. With the parsonage they were able to offer their new pastor a much reduced salary greatly enhancing their cash flow situation. They were also able to save money by cutting the secretary and janitor positions. The pastor was given the responsibility of finding volunteers with the understanding, of course, that he should not try to do all the work himself. The church was located close to a Christian camp and university which enjoyed the loyalty of some of the church's members, but which had taken recent positions that concerned the pastor.

Which scenario exhibits a healthier environment for strong leadership. How so?