



II Timothy 2:8-15 New Revised Standard Version

⁸ Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David—that is my gospel, ⁹ for which I suffer hardship, even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. ¹⁰ Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, so that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. ¹¹ The saying is sure:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;

¹² if we endure, we will also reign with him;

if we deny him, he will also deny us;

¹³ if we are faithless, he remains faithful—

he cannot deny himself.

¹⁴ Remind them of this, and warn them before the Lord that they are to avoid wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening. ¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth.

Notes

Recenter Your Focus

In the early 1990s, a Christian music group by the name of 4Him made popular a tune which was entitled, “The Basics of Life.” The premise of the song is that sometimes in the chaos and confusion

of life, we need to revisit those fundamental beliefs and practices which are characteristic of being a Christian. If that message was important about thirty years ago, how much more so for today?

Call it recentering, renewal, or recommitment, the idea is to peel away all of the extras which cling to our lives due to a variety of factors and begin anew that which relates to our purpose and vision for life. We hear of such language from business owners, politicians, and athletes to name a few.

Not long ago, I listened to a professional golfer speak of learning to play his game once again. By that, the golfer was not implying that he had forgotten how to swing a golfclub, but rather that his enjoyment for the sport had been lost in overthinking, overworking, and overanalyzing every facet of his game. He needed to recenter on the fundamentals which made the game of golf meaningful for him to begin with.

While vastly different from the sport of golf, our lives as Christians can become stagnate and lacking in meaning. Paul understood that for Timothy to continue forward he needed not only to treasure his calling, but also, from time to time, recenter his focus. Why was and is that important in the lives of Christians. Because we can become caught up in all of the nonessentials and, as a result, allow ourselves to be carried offtrack by the “lesser things” related to Church.

Stephen Covey speaks of this in his book, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. Covey states, “The main thing is to make the main thing the main thing.” While not using those exact words, the Apostle Paul reminded Timothy of what was essential to his faith and the execution of his calling. Yes, it would be uncomfortable, require his best, and not be of his own abilities, but Timothy needed to keep before him these foundational pieces as well:

1. Our message must always be rooted in the Gospel.
2. Our limitations in no way limit the Gospel.
3. Our character is pivotal to proclaiming the Gospel.

Prayer Pebble: Lord, I have days where my heart and mind wander. I long to honor you, but sometimes I lose my focus. Stir in my heart a renewed zeal for your Gospel and enable me to remain focused upon what matters the most. Amen.