

2 Tim 2.1-7 Grace for Hard Service

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Date: 13 September 2026

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[0:00] In 1924 on July 14th there was a competition of races amongst Scotland, England and Ireland.

! One of the competitors for those races was Eric Little.! Eric Little competed in the 100-yard race and won it.

On the same day he went on to compete in the 200-yard race and he won that. And then on the same day he ran the 440-yard race.

And near the beginning there was some sort of kerfuffle that happened and he got tripped off track. Now you can imagine there must have been a split-second decision to make to just feel defeated because everybody he's racing against are the best and they've trained to out-compete everybody. And how would you even recover from that? But the race wasn't over and he didn't just sit there and pout. He didn't complain or try to persuade his competitors to come and help him back up and give him a head start.

[1:05] He got up and he continued to run and he ran with everything his body was capable of doing. And he started to catch up. And within the 440-yard distance he continued to pass runner after runner.

And he actually ended up winning the race. It would have been very hard for him to do so and a lot of hard training to be able to do that. And then the following year in 1924 was the Olympics and he competed in the Olympics.

And his strength was the 100-yard race but that was on Sunday, the Lord's Day, the Christian Sabbath. So he wouldn't compete in it. So they put him in other races that he wasn't as strong in. And one of those was the 440-yard race. And he ended up not only winning it but setting a new record. Now, the Apostle Paul uses metaphors, one of them being athletics, of running a race, to describe enduring hardship for the preservation of the gospel.

And today we will be looking at 2 Timothy. And we're going to start chapters 2. And we'll be looking at verses 1-7 but I will read to 13.

[2:20] Verse 1. You, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses.

Commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. You, therefore, must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life that he may please him who satisfies, sorry, please him who enlists him as a soldier.

And also, if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. The hard-working farmer must be first to partake of the crops.

Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer even to the point of chains.

[3:28] But the word of God is not chained. Therefore, I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

This is a faithful saying. For if we died with him, we shall also live with him. If we endure, we shall also reign with him.

If we deny him, he also will deny us. If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself. Our great God, we praise you again that you are the one true living God.

We thank you that we have supernatural revelation. We pray that as we seek to sit under the ministry of the word, the means of grace on this Lord's Day, we pray, Holy Spirit, that you would illuminate your word to us and that you would be communicating grace to us through this means of

grace.

I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Now in verses one to seven, we see that faithfully passing on the good deposit will involve suffering hardship, which necessitates being strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

[4:45] So first, there's a bit of a transition and that transition is exhortation to strong perseverance. And then secondly, we see exhortation to endure hardship with these three metaphor images.

So first of all, exhortation to strong perseverance. As I said, verses one and two are kind of a transition moving on to chapter to verse three. But let's take a look at what it says.

The exhortation to strong perseverance. We see outline God's power, God's gospel. And then based on those two things to train and ordain.

So God's power, it starts off by saying, therefore, and verse one. And the word therefore, what it's doing is it's gathering up the preceding concerns in chapter one, before we progress into chapter two, which is namely to not be ashamed.

When the world disapproves of the gospel message to not feel disgraced or disappointed, there won't be future disappointed disappointment for believers, but glory.

[5:54] So the gospel is not a matter of shame or disappointment, but a matter of glory. Therefore, so gathering up this preceding concern, do not be ashamed.

Therefore, be strong and remembering that God has not given us a spirit of fear. Therefore, be strong. To be strong means to undergo suffering for the advancement of the kingdom.

And what's the advancement of the kingdom? The advancement of the kingdom is lost sinners turning in faith and repentance to Christ. It's salvation. So being strong, undergoing suffering for the sake of the advancement of the kingdom for this, for salvation.

It says, be strong in the grace. Now, remember what grace is. Grace is not based on worthiness. It's not based on wages. It's not what we deserve.

It's not. Grace is not getting what you deserve in this context. Therefore, be strong in the grace.

Grace is not getting what you deserve because you're such an icon of human strength.

[7:01] But grace, grace is a gift. Grace is unmerited. And grace is God's unmerited favor, which means it's not previously possessed and not personally deserved.

So it says, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. He's speaking about something that is not naturally possessed and already there, but it is a gift.

Something that is unmerited. And then he goes, then on the question then that we must ask from this is on what grounds?

Be strong in the grace. And if grace is an unmerited favor, an undeserved gift, then on what grounds is this grace granted and for whose sake?

And of course, he goes on to say, therefore, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Now, Ephesians 6.10 says, finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

[8:07] Remembering the context of what's going on here, it's the perseverance in the gospel proclamation from one generation to the next.

And in church, which is the spiritual temple, the means of grace, it's the means which are ordained by scripture and which have accompanied with it a promise of blessing.

So it's the means, the ordinary means by which God has promised to bless his people through this being done. So if, for example, somebody who is unregenerate, who is not a Christian, thinks that they are going to preach the word, it's not the pure preaching of the word.

The pure preaching of the word, the pure and due administration of the sacraments, these means of grace need to be done according to God's way. Because it's not according to the power of the person or to the cleverness of the person or the academic abilities of the person.

So someone might say, OK, well, they're not regenerate, but they're they're academically advanced. And so they would be able to tell you what the Bible says. But the means of grace aren't based on the power of a person's intellect or academics.

[9:24] It's God's working through God's means through which he communicates grace to his people. And if you recall previously, in Romans 10, it says that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

So one of the means of grace is the preaching of the word. So through the preaching of the word, which is more of the direct context of what he's talking about here, Timothy and ministers of the

word to endure hardship in the proclamation of the word, the good deposit.

Something is going on in the pure preaching of the word where it's a means of grace, which means that God has promised blessing to his people.

And what one of the blessings which God has promised, according to Romans 10, is faith, either granting faith or growing faith. So the Holy Spirit communicates grace to us through the preaching of the word, wherein by God, by the work of the spirit of God, grace is communicated to us and we are built up in faith.

So faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. And the proclamation of the gospel, the preservation of the gospel is imperative and not to compromise on it, but to endure hardship, even though it will offend the world.

[10 : 43] But what is so offensive of the world is what is so important about the gospel. Not only it's necessity, but also it's power in salvation. If we were just to say, if we wanted to water it down and didn't want to offend anybody, and we just said, you know, God loves you, that's not the gospel.

Because the gospel tells us that God is holy and that God is righteous and that God is just. And God has given us his moral law, but we have broken God's moral law.

We have transgressed against God's moral law, which he requires of us perfect obedience. So because we have not given perfect obedience and because God is just, God's justice and God's righteousness and God's holiness demands punishment for injustice.

And as we know about God's attributes, is there not parts of him that he possesses at times and not at other times, but it is who he is. God is just and he cannot set aside his justice for the sake of love. He is both just, the perfection of justice and the perfection of love at all times. So God's justice needs to be satisfied.

[11 : 58] And according to God's justice, our sin, our transgressing against his holy and moral standard, demands punishment, condemnation, death, and wrath, which is offensive to the world.

It's offensive to the one who is not in Christ. It's offensive to the one who has not yet apprehended the mercy of Christ because it's saying, what I have to offer God deserves condemnation and wrath, which is why in mankind's problem, it required the incarnation.

That is God, the son, and the, um, um, assuming our nature and in human, um, taking to himself a body, he perfected obedience, that which was required, meriting eternal blessedness and eternal life.

And as a spotless and blemish substitute, he took our sins to pay the penalty on our behalf. He not only suffered and died as a substitute for sins, but by the power of God, he was raised from the dead with victory over sin and death, with our hope in the resurrection, because Christ lives and intercedes for us.

And he has ascended on high with all dignity and authority and is seated on the throne as our redeemer, as our mediator, as our prophet, as our priest, and as our king. And so, well, we who are believers may have sin, we do have sin, and we have remaining corruption, and we will find that although we do not desire to sin, that we do at times do what we know we shouldn't do or do not do what we know that we should do.

[13 : 39] And while we have an accuser who will gladly point out all the ways in which we've broken God's law, as far as divine justice is concerned, and looking upon God's people, sees the righteousness of Christ.

And that's all there is to our justification. There's not a final justification where we need to earn the maintenance of our justification, but Christ's righteousness is accredited to us and is received by faith alone, not by our works.

And this gospel message is imperative for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ on this earth. And how is it advanced? It's through the preaching of the word, preaching of the gospel, which is why even though the world will disapprove of it, and even though it will want Christians to be ashamed of the gospel message, it is necessary.

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. So, exhortation to strong perseverance of God's power, and next we see God's gospel.

Therefore be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and the things that you have heard from me. These things, what are these things? These things that you have heard from me.

[15 : 01] In other words, what is passed down? What is received? It's not what's novel. It's not I had this new apparition, or this dream, or this new thought, or this new perspective on imputation.

But it's the good deposit, the apostolic teaching and writing, that which is forever written for the church. And because it is written, there is no longer new revelation of a new direction the church is to go, or a new way of salvation, but what is written down, and the preservation of what is written. Now, Galatians 1, 11 to 12, the Apostle Paul wrote, But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.

For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. So we're going to come back to this, but I want you to see the connection. It's divine truth, the words of Christ, entrusted to the apostles for the establishment of the church and the inscripturation of the word of God, and being completed with the completed canon, completed of the scriptures, then it is the ministers, such as Timothy, who preserve the word written through the preceding generations.

It says, The things you have heard from me, and it goes on to mention many witnesses, many witnesses in that it was publicly verified, confirmed, and proclaimed. The gospel that we read here in scripture, it's not that it was some sort of private, exclusive revelation, or some sort of angelic apparitions, or secret hidden golden plates and seer stones to interpret it for a new cultic belief and practice.

[16:53] It was publicly verified, confirmed, and proclaimed. So with God's power and God's gospel, we then see to train and ordain.

In verse 2, the second part of verse 2, And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, here it is, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

So this is to be committed. It says, Commit these. What is these? These, what is to be committed, it is the good deposit, that is apostolic teaching and apostolic writing, to be entrusted and passed down to qualified men.

Now we live, in this Western culture, we live in a culture of gratification, where this culture wants gratification now, and the rest can wait till later.

Gratification of dopamines, instantly with my iPhone, scrolling through social media. Work, work can wait till later. Or, intimacy now, marriage later, pleasure now, consequences later, or ease and comfort now, and we don't even think about later, just focused on now, and the gratification of now.

[18:12] Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die, and then we cease to exist, so, live your best life now. But this is completely contrary, to the gospel, and to Christianity.

Christianity is very different. Christianity is very future focused, future oriented, both eschatologically, eschatologically means, last things.

So, being focused on, last things, having our orientation, to last things, as well as the means, because God has also, ordained the means, along the way.

Namely, the means of grace. And, if God has ordained the end, and if God has ordained the means, along the end, then that involves also, future laborers, in gospel work.

Because, right now, the gospel is important. And, God has ordained the means, and, whenever, those end times, the last things come, the gospel, needs to preserve, through faithful proclamation, of the gospel, throughout all times.

[19:25] So, Christianity, is very different. We need, future, laborers, of gospel work, and being, future focused, we also need to be focused, on future, laborers, of gospel work, not just on, on now.

Now, future, oriented, the churches, believers, are future oriented, while also, holding to historic, teaching. So, both looking, forward, future orientation, as well as, looking back, historic teaching, entrusted, and passed down.

Which means, no new gospels, it's not like we say, well, this is 2026, so we need a new gospel, for 2026, or for, this culture is different, than the culture was, when Paul was alive, so we need to, have a different way, of thinking, for today's culture.

No new gospels, no new revelation, no novelty, no itch to clog religion, with new words, no new ideas, but being faithful, to the good deposit.

And then it says, faithful men, able to teach. So there are, requirements here, for whom is being trusted, faithful men, able to teach.

[20:37] Now what does, faithful mean, and how does the church, know, when, this person, meets this requirement, because it's not like, somebody just comes, into the church, with their, this is my resume, of being a faithful man, and here's my letter, of reference, from the most high, doesn't happen that way.

So faithful, is according to, 1st Timothy, chapter 3. The qualifications, for an elder. He is faithful, in all of those things.

And not just, faithful for a day, but faithful, when it means, enduring hardship. If you remember, Pilgrim's Progress, his companion, Faithful, his name was Faithful, and he was faithful, even unto death.

So faithful, is not for temporary gain, but for God's glory, and faithful, to endure hardship, for God's glory. So faithful men, who are able to teach, or apt to teach, or fit to teach.

In other words, knowledge, understanding, and work. And to work, having gifting. Now, just because somebody, might desire, to do the work, doesn't mean, that they are able, or apt to teach, which is why, vetting is so important, and, a testing period, or an ordination, exam, in order to see, if they have the knowledge, and understanding, to be faithful, and to be entrusted, with the good deposit, to teach it, and to pass it down, to others.

[22 : 10] So the ability, to communicate knowledge, and understanding. In other words, he will faithfully, pass down, the good deposit, entrusted, to them.

So, with the requirement, to appropriate God's power, and faithfully, pass on, God's gospel, there is a subsequent appeal, to suffer hardship, for the gospel, based on, these objective realities, of God's power, and God's gospel.

So in other words, for what is articulated, in verses one to two, for that to, effectively occur, there will be hardship. So what follows, is an exhortation, to endure hardship, because the necessity, the necessity, to endure hardship.

An exhortation, to endure hardship, in fruitful labor, is here shown, through proverb parables, of warfare, of athletics, and of agriculture, in metaphor pictures.

So warfare hardship, athletic hardship, and agriculture hardship. So first of all, warfare, hardship. Cultures change a lot, and sometimes, our thinking, changes with culture, and we might picture things, or words, or experiences, according to, how it is, in our current culture.

[23 : 39] But to understand, what is really meant here, by warfare hardship, I want to give an example, of what not to envision, and what to envision. When we think of, warfare hardship, don't think of, the U.S. Army's, recruitment video, I think, of Emma.

It's a cartoon, of this, this young girl, who grew up with two moms, and one mom had difficulties, but she, overcame her difficulties, and so this Emma, was overpowered, and so, she can do hard things, and so she, she joined the army, and, gives presentations, on power points.

That's not, warfare hardship. So he says, when you're thinking of, the metaphor of, enduring war, warfare hardship, instead of thinking, the U.S. Army's, recruitment video, think of, the Russian Army's, recruitment video, where there's, big strong dudes, that are given, so much training, and with the, precision of, weapons, that they're just, ruthless enemies, who will, kill their opponents, before their opponents, kill them.

This is more, the image of, warfare, warfare hardship, that is to be, brought to mind. Now, when a soldier, experiences hardship, in battle, what do you think, would happen, if he just sat there, and pouted?

Or if he just started, to complain? Or if he said, to the enemy's, hold, time out, hold on, and expected his enemies, to come pat him, on the back, and help him up? No, his enemies, are trying to kill him. So to endure, as a soldier, hardship, in battle, means, enduring, hardship, not just sitting there, and that you would not, to endure hardship, means to overcome, the ruthless opponents, who are trying, to overcome you.

[25 : 37] Warfare, battle, is about enemies, who are trying to kill you, and they train, to do so. So you have to train, and endure the hardship, of training, in order to endure, the hardship, of their training, trying to out, compete you, as your opponents.

So, why would ministers, of the word, who are engaged, in spiritual warfare, not likewise, need to endure hardship? Look at verses 3 and 4. You, you therefore, must endure hardship, as a good soldier, of Jesus Christ.

No one engaged, in warfare, entangles himself, with the affairs, of this life, that he may please him, who enlisted him, as a soldier. Now, to, to help explain, a little bit of this, when it says, the affairs of life, secular business, well, it's, it's not sinful, for a Christian, to be engaged, in secular business, just the perspective of it, secular business, is of this world, and it is temporal, and this world is temporal.

So what's going on, in this text, by the affairs of this life, it's not condemning, those whose vocation, is of a secular employment, rather, what it's getting at, is in terms of the one, who is given, to the ministry of the word, is to be wholly given, to that cause.

Now, when we think of the apostle Paul, and his life, and ministry, he lived off of, secular, secular business, at times, when it is needed, when it was needed.

[27 : 17] And even today, and throughout history, many small churches, or church plants, necessitate, bivocational leaders, for a time, such as, Paul was in, tent making.

What Paul, is getting at, is unnecessarily, entangling, in secular employment. A phrase that I think, is quite fitting, perhaps you've heard it before, is that, it's better to be a warrior, in a garden, than a gardener, in a war.

In other words, the person who's a warrior, he's given, to training for war, but it doesn't mean, he can't be in the garden. But, when he's in the garden, he's ready, at any given moment, to his calling, of warfare.

So, if his tomatoes, are about to turn red, they can wait, his calling, is to go, to war. So, warfare, when you think of the metaphor, it's a metaphor, of something that is earthly, to illustrate, what is spiritual.

With earthly warfare, the end of earthly warfare, is to obtain victory, over the enemies, of the fatherland. A faithful minister, of the word, as a good soldier, of Jesus Christ, is called to live, not a life of ease, but like a soldier, a life of hardship, exposed to difficulties, hazards, and dangers, from the enemies, of the fatherland.

[28 : 44] What is the fatherland? It's the heavenly kingdom, of Christ, the new Jerusalem. So, the first, metaphor is, warfare, hardship, and the second metaphor, we see is, athletic, hardship.

Now, I mentioned, Eric Little, earlier, and how, he would have, endured hardship, in training, and discipline, of training, as well as, in competing, against, tough opponents, who are trying to, to win, to, to beat him.

And in 1924, he, he not only, competed, in what wasn't his, strong race, but he won it, and he also set a record.

He was asked, what his secret was, to be so, so fast. And his answer, is that, the secret of my success, over the 400 meters, is that, I run the first 200 meters, as fast as I can, then, for the second 200 meters, with God's help, I run faster.

Look at verse five. And so, if anyone competes, in athletics, he is not crowned, unless he competes, according to the rules. Now, Eric Little, got the fact that, you're not going to win, by a life of ease, but that, you have to, be competent, and qualified, to compete, and, to endure, hardship.

[30 : 10] Giving everything, that your body's, capable of, and then, after doing that, to try to, do it even stronger, would be very hard, and of course, take hardship, and training, to get to that point.

But he's competing, against opponents, who are trying, to overcome him. So also, in athletics, in any race, you're competing, against opponents, not, who were just, sitting on the couch, binge watching, soap operas, for months, but, they have been training, with everything, and throwing off, whatever they can hinder, to out compete, everybody else, who's training, to beat them.

Competing, against opponents, who are trying, to overcome you. And so, must endure, hardship, and labor. And in a race, there's only one person, who wins, who wins first place.

And the people, who compete in it, let's see, there's a hundred runners, who compete in a race. It's not like they say, I'm only going to compete, if it's guaranteed, that I'm going to win. They train, as hard as they can, just for the chance, at winning.

And if they win, it's for a prize, that's perishable. Not so, with the kingdom of Christ, which is eternal. So, so to do so, of course, for a race, for runners, in order to compete, in a way, to train, in a way, to win, to out-compete, everybody else, who is training, competing to win, it requires precision, and enduring hardship, in training, and in discipline, and in diet, and nutrition.

[31 : 47] But it endures, it requires enduring, much hardship. Now, I'm going to say something, that's probably going to be, well, you might not agree with me, but that's okay.

But I think the kids, will be on my side, with this one. But I like craft dinner. I think it's good. But here's the thing, you can't eat craft dinner, for every meal, all the time, and then expect, to be able to, out-compete others, in a race.

You need, a proper, and diverse, diet. So also, with spiritual warfare, to not be fed, by the word, there would not be, an expectation, to be able to, endure hardship.

And notice, it says, according to the rules. To do something, not according to the rules, to cheat, is, to make it easier, in a way that, is, with an unsanctioned, advantage, against the others. Not cheating, is what's, required here. In other words, meeting, the qualifications. Winning, is by enduring, according to the rules, the rules being, hard, and painful, but doing so, meeting, the qualifications.

[33 : 16] So we see it, metaphor, picture, in warfare, hardship, and athletic, hardship, and then third, an agriculture, hardship. Look at verse six.

The hard-working farmer, must be first, to partake, of the crops. Now notice first, what it says, the hard-working, farmer. In other words, this is the real deal, not, not someone, that's just in it, for the show.

The farmer tills, the farmer plants, the farmer waters, and works hard, to do so. The farmer plants, tills, and waters, God gives the increase. But yet still, the farmer benefits.

The farmer enjoys, the fruits, of his toils. And according, to this metaphor, for the minister, of the word, it is rewarding, whether a farmer, or a minister, of the word, to see the fruit, of your labor. And fruitful harvest, doesn't come, without hard labor. And, the apostle Paul, who wrote this, later on, in 2nd Timothy, he, he, he summarizes, these three metaphors.

[34 : 25] Now with a farmer, the word, the Greek word, to keep, to guard, is, is a reference, to like the garden, to guard, to keep the garden, to work the garden.

So there's like a, a gardening, or an agricultural, understanding, to the word, keep. So the apostle Paul, in 2nd Timothy 4, 7, he says, I have fought the good fight, warfare hardship.

I have finished the race, athletic hardship. I have kept the faith, agriculture hardship. And then after these three metaphor images, in verse 7, it says, consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding, in all things.

So consider, and understand. These things are to be considered, and to understand. Now enduring hardship, is not practiced, without understanding.

And understanding, it's not understood, unless God gives it. Notice it says, the Lord give, unless the Lord give. Consider what I say, and may the Lord give, you understanding.

[35 : 34] Now what did we look at earlier? That's a gift. Grace. Grace is a gift. It's from the Lord, in the grace, of Christ Jesus.

Now these three metaphor pictures, are examples, of the service to be rendered, in enduring hardship. Enduring hardship means, in the ministry of the word, enduring hardship, whether it be with Timothy, or whether it be, today in 2026, means to suffer evil.

To endure hardship, for the preservation of the gospel, in a world, that disapproves, of the gospel, means there will be, hardship.

So, suffer evil. Endure hardship, means to suffer evil, to expect evil, to expect affliction, and patiently endure, being strong, in the grace, that is in Christ Jesus.

So what are some, some concluding uses, that we can take from this, for us today? Okay. The good deposit, is, we see, entrusted, for passing down.

[36 : 47] The good deposit, is entrusted to Timothy, to pass down, and subsequent ministers, of the word, and so on, throughout subsequent, generations.

It's from Christ, to the apostle, the good deposit, the apostle, to Timothy, and also inscriptured, for ministers of the word.

They're no longer apostles, but through, the minister of the word, and the pure preaching of the word, God speaks, through his word, through the preservation, of the good deposit, entrusted for passing down.

So Christ, to the apostles, the apostle to Timothy, Timothy, to subsequent ministers, and those ministers, to subsequent ministers, and so forth, throughout generations, and follow those generations, generations along, for thousands of years, and turn into, your foreign Baptist church. Now we were, a church plant, because there wasn't already, a well-ordered, like-minded church, faithful with, the good deposit. And now, we are a church.

[37 : 55] And, as we consider, in history, the presence of Christ, through the proclamation, of the gospel, and the preserving, of, of the word, the means, through which, the gospel is preserved, throughout generations, that is, why we are here today, and that will continue, in the future.

And we are also, to be future-oriented. So, what about the future? What about, the next generation? What about, our children, and our children's children?

What about, other surrounding communities, where there may not be, a well-ordered, faithful, church, faithfully, contending for the faith, once for all, delivered to the saints? Which, if that had not occurred, generations prior to us, then, things would not, those means, which God uses, wouldn't have, brought us, to being, Trinity Reformed Baptist Church. So, what will be, for subsequent generations? Which is why, we as a church, need to be faithful, in preserving, the good deposit, the faith, once for all, delivered to the saints? [39 : 13] And then, subsequently, in future, or future generations, planting, other well-ordered churches, where there is a need. So, there's future labor, for future, fruit, and for there to be, future fruit, that labor, will, there will be hardship, and it will require, enduring hardship. So, where is the strength, found, to endure the hardship, for there to be, future fruit, and future labor, for subsequent fruit? By the grace, that is in Christ Jesus, which is union, with Christ, and communion, with Christ. Union is being, united to Christ, to be in Christ, to be, quickened by the Holy Spirit, granted faith, and repentance, and united to Christ. And communion, with Christ, is that continuing, near communion, with Christ, through prayer, and the word. Let's pray. Okay.