

# Kept by the Power of God

## I. God's Grace

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2 Timothy 1

- vs. 9        *“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,*
- vs. 10       *“But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who has abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:*
- vs. 11       *“Whereunto (the gospel) I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.*
- vs. 12       *“For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep (guard) that which I have committed to him against that day.*
- vs. 13       *“Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*
- vs. 14       *“That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Spirit which dwells in us.*
- vs. 15       *“This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellius and Hermogenes.*
- vs. 16       *“The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:*

vs. 17 *“But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.*

vs. 18 *“The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.”*

This portion of scripture is probably one of the greatest sections that Paul ever taught on the grace of God. The book of 2 Timothy is Paul's dying letter in which he is reiterating the power in understanding grace: how it applies to our lives, how it applies to our understanding, how it applies to enduring the trials and pressures of life.

We were saved, not by our own works, but according to God's grace. We were actually seen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

## **II. Because He is Blessed, We are Blessed**

Ephesians 1

vs. 3 *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.*

vs. 4 *“According as he hath chosen us in him from the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

vs. 5 *“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,*

vs. 6 *“To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved.*

vs. 7 *“In whom (in the beloved) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*

vs. 8            *“Wherein (in Christ) he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.”*

vs. 11          *“In whom (in Christ) also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”*

We were saved, not by our own works, but by Him Who had reserved these things for us before the world began. Before creation, before angels, before Lucifer, before the universe, before the earth was created, God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Son, and the Holy Spirit planned the plan of redemption. We had not yet been created and God blessed us. How? He blessed the Son and the Son held all of those blessings for us until the day that we were in Him. We are blessed because we are in the Beloved.

In and of ourselves, we have no life. We have no inheritance until we become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Everything we have originally belonged to Jesus. In blessing Jesus, God had us in mind.

### **III. Benefits of Being “In Him”**

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Jesus did not need an inheritance. He did not need eternal life. He did not need healing or prosperity. God poured them out on His Son for Jesus to hold for us. We are the ones who need the benefits because we are fallen creatures. If it had not been for fallen man, there would be no need for any of the benefits.

The first benefit of being “in Christ”, is eternal life. Jesus was the first to have eternal life and now we have His life. Next, we have righteousness because we are “in Him”. Jesus was righteous and we share His righteousness. Because Jesus has a destiny, we have a destiny. Because He is elected, we are elected. We are children of God because we share His Sonship. Jesus is the Great High Priest, and because of this, we are a kingdom of priests. Because He is King, we have been made kings through Him. We also share in His sanctification. Finally, we are accepted because we are in the Beloved. On my own, I would never be accepted into heaven, but because I am “in Him” I have been accepted into heaven also.

### **III. “Sozo”**

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Ephesians 2

vs. 8        *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

vs. 9        *“Not of works, lest any man should boast.”*

The Word “saved” is the Greek word “sozo”. It has many different meanings in addition to salvation. It means deliverance, wholeness, and healing. It can also be translated “whole”. This all-encompassing word is always linked with salvation.

*“For by grace are ye saved...”*

This phrase in the Greek is in the perfect tense. The perfect tense combines the past and present tenses together. It is very unique to the Greek language. Kenneth Wuest correctly translates this portion of the verse, *“For by grace were you saved in the past with results that keep coming in the present.”*

One example demonstrating this tense would be to say, “I started the car”. In the perfect tense this would indicate that I started the car, maybe an hour ago, and it has been running since that time. I do not need to go out and keep starting the car, because it has been running since I started it.

The one thing in the universe that started and never needs to be started again is salvation. The day we believed in Jesus Christ, eternal life began in us. We do not need to go back and believe a second time or a third time or a fourth time. We may be carnal, but we are still saved. We may not be living a great life, but we are still saved.

### **IV. Positional Truths**

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Righteousness, heirship, and priesthood are positional truths. Because of our position in Christ, they always belong to us. When we sin, we have not lost our salvation.

Only a priest is able to ask for forgiveness; your priesthood remains intact.

I John 1

vs. 9 *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

First John 1:9 is written to priests. When a sinner gets saved, he does not confess his “sins”. He is not a priest. He cannot confess his sins. The sinner confesses the Lordship of Jesus. Only a Christian can confess his sins. Only a priest can come into the presence of God before the Great High Priest, Jesus Christ, and say “Forgive me, Father”.

## **V. The Importance of Grace**

2 Timothy 1

vs. 9 *“Who hath (past tense) saved us...”*

The word “hath” is past tense and means “once and for all”. Once and for all He has called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace.

Having an understanding of the grace of God will help us come through trials and troubles. The more we understand God’s grace, the easier it will become to come through tests, trials, and the onslaughts of Satan.

Paul said that the way he kept his confidence in prison and did not become discouraged was by realizing in Whom he had believed. Paul was fully persuaded that God was able to keep that which Paul had committed to Him *“against that day”* (vs. 12).

When we understand the grace of God, it helps us stay focused in the midst of trials and troubles.

People often argue against the grace of God saying, “Yes, but if I believe in God’s grace, I will just want to run out and sin.” People will sin whether or not you teach on the subject of grace. The grace of God actually teaches us *not* to sin. When people truly begin to understand the grace of God, they begin to fall more and more in love with Him and they

serve Him out of love rather than out of fear. God is not sitting in heaven with a ball bat, waiting to beat us up for the slightest thing we may do wrong.

## Romans 6

- vs. 1      *“What shall we say then? (what is the conclusion of the five previous chapters?) Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?”*
- vs. 2      *“God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”*
- vs. 3      *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?”*
- vs. 4      *“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*

The end result of understanding the grace of God is walking in newness of life. The word “walk” means to carry out your daily life. The end result is that you can walk through trials and troubles and never stop. Satan desires to stop us midstream, but understanding God’s grace helps us to continue walking.

## **VI. Called to Liberty**

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### Galatians 5

- vs. 13      *“For, brethren, you have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion for the flesh, but by love serve one another.”*

Unless you understand liberty, you cannot serve. Again, people say, “Grace is a license to sin”. But that thinking is wrong; grace is a license to serve. You are not free to serve until fear is removed. Anyone who is serving God out of fear is not free. If we serve God out of fear of losing everything we have, out of fear of not pleasing Him, and feel that we

must do everything right, it will become more and more difficult to serve God. If we require ourselves to do so much for God on one day, we will need to do more the next, and the next, until we can no longer handle it. We are living under the law and because we cannot live this way, we eventually blame God. Discouragement enters and we finally throw up our hands and say, "Who can live the Christian life?" We forget that we are to live this life supernaturally, not naturally. It is in His power, not our own.

Titus 2

vs. 11 *"The grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared to all men,*

vs. 12 *"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."*

Without an understanding of grace, you cannot live soberly, righteously, or godly in this present world. Many churches have presented a distorted view of the Christian life. Rather than emphasize the grace of God, they emphasize law. They preach "Don't, don't, don't concerning sin" and more often than not, the result is people go out and do what they are told they cannot do.

Paul was in prison, yet he could endure tests, trials, and pressures that others could not endure because his eyes were focused on the grace of God.

## **VII. Paul in Prison**

2 Timothy

vs. 12 *"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."*

*"For the which cause"* is referring to Paul having been appointed by God to be an apostle and teacher. *"These things"* is a reference to Paul being in prison. Paul was not

suffering because he was a criminal. The Roman government was saying, "Paul is a criminal. He is subversive. He has come to overthrow our government." Some of the believers were beginning to believe what was being said about Paul. That is why Paul told Timothy at the beginning of this letter, "Don't be ashamed of me. Don't believe what they are saying about me. Don't believe the false reports."

When you decide to live whole-heartedly for the Lord, you will suffer persecution. The world may give some other reason for coming against you, but it is because you are a Christian.

## I Peter 2

vs. 19      *"For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully."*

There are great rewards awaiting us when we suffer for righteousness' sake.

## 2 Timothy 1

vs. 8      *"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;"*

vs. 12      *"...nevertheless I am not ashamed:"*

The word "ashamed" in both of these verses means "embarrassed". Paul is saying, "I am in prison because I am an apostle and a teacher, and I am not embarrassed. Timothy, don't be embarrassed or ashamed of me." Toward the end of the chapter, Paul addresses the congregation with the same message. Paul does not care what others think of him based on what they have heard. He says, "I can tell you why I'm in prison. It is because I did the will of God."

The first time Paul was in prison it was because he did not follow God's will. He went to Jerusalem after he had been warned several times not to go. But this time Paul is in prison for being an apostle and teacher and for doing the will of God.

## VIII. I Know in Whom I Have Believed

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*“...for I know whom I have believed,”*

Paul could have focused on the fact that he was in prison and that he was chained to other prisoners. He could have dwelled on the rumors that he would soon be martyred (he was later beheaded). Paul could have thought about all of these things and become embarrassed and discouraged, but he kept from being discouraged by knowing in Whom he believed.

There are several words in the Greek that we in English translate as “know”. “*Ginosko*” is a Greek word for “know”, which means to generally know. “*Epiginosko*” is another Greek word for “know” and it means “to be revealed”. But the Greek word for “know” in this verse is the word “*oida*” and it means “inherent knowledge”. This word indicates that we are not looking back on a time when we learned something or when it was revealed to us. It is a knowledge that is so ingrained that we cannot remember when we learned it. It has always been a part of us. This is a reference to something we do not need to pull up, it is already ingrained.

If I asked what the sum of two plus two is, or when you learned how to talk, most of us would not remember. These things are such a part of us we do not even need to think about it.

Paul is saying, “I don’t even need to stop and think about who is my Savior. When pressure comes against me, what comes out, like squeezing a sponge, is ‘I know in whom I have believed’, and His name is Jesus!”

The word “*believed*” is in the perfect tense. It would better be translated, “I know in whom I have believed in the past with results that keep right on coming up until now.”

The phrase “and am persuaded” is also in the perfect tense. We could say, “There was a day when I became persuaded and since that time I have not been unpersuaded. I don’t need to keep working on my persuasion. I have always been persuaded since the day I became persuaded.”

The Greek word for “to keep” actually means “to guard”. Paul had experienced many tests and trials in his life. In shipwrecks, beatings, being stoned to the point of death, in prisons, Paul always knew that his ministry was not complete. Paul was in prison five years after disobeying God and when he got out, he admitted to the Philippians, “I came to a point where I was ready to die. God gave me a choice; I could stay or I could go. To stay was more needful for you and to go would be better for me. But I decided to stay in your behalf and I look forward to seeing you.”

## 2 Timothy 4

vs. 6        *“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.*

vs. 7        *“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:”*

Paul is facing death again and this time he knows that he is going on. He knew that to be absent from the body was to be present with the Lord.

Most of us would not be able to handle the pressure Paul was facing. He was in prison under false charges, knowing that he was going to be beheaded. Timothy had disappointed him, the congregations had disappointed him, and his friends had disappointed him. At the end of the chapter Paul says, “I am here by myself”.

How did Paul endure? He kept his focus on the Lord and knew that it was the Lord Who would keep him.

Paul is saying, “There was a day I became persuaded and since that day nothing has shaken that confidence that my salvation is secure in the Lord Jesus Christ, for I know in whom I have believed.”

## 2 Timothy 1

vs. 12       *“...and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”*

The phrase *“that day”* is referring to the day when Paul will go to heaven. Paul is saying, *“I know beyond any shadow of a doubt that when I die and stand before Jesus, I’m not going to stand there based on my works. I’m going to be standing there based on my faith in Jesus Christ and Him guarding my salvation.”*

## **IX. Saved by God’s Faith?**

Are we saved by our faith or by God’s? The answer is “both”. God approached us with salvation. We did not pursue God; He pursued us. The gospel was preached to us. It may have been through a preacher, a teacher, a pastor, by television or radio, or by someone witnessing to us on the street. Perhaps a tract was laying on a table and you read it. Whatever avenue God worked through, there came a day when you said “yes” to Jesus and became born again. At that moment something happened. Salvation began to operate in your life and from that day it has been guarded by God.

Many people believe that you have to keep using faith to stay saved. Faith after salvation is for growth, maturity, blessings, healings, all of the things God’s promises us as believers. God’s will brought us salvation; our will accepted it. Now it is God’s will to keep us saved.

To stop believing in Jesus and say, “I have lost my salvation” is the same as saying “I no longer exist” after being born into this earth!

## **X. Natural Versus Spiritual Birth**

There is a great parallel between our physical birth and our spiritual birth.

Natural children are produced as a result of sex. Once conception occurs, the child begins to form. The child comes to term and is born into this earth. If sex produced the child, is it sex that will keep that child in existence? If a husband and wife stop having sex, will that child suddenly evaporate? These are absurd questions. Once a child is born, that child is here until he or she one day dies. I have a wonderful son but suppose my son wound up in prison. I may not be happy that he is in prison but he is still my child.

If a Christian decided that he was no longer going to believe in Jesus Christ, after he had already received Him as Lord and Savior, that individual cannot nullify that results of his past belief that originally led him to salvation. We can stop the benefits of our salvation. We can stop the joy and the rewards of our salvation. But we cannot stop the salvation that began because it is not in our hands.

## **XI. Against that Day**

vs. 12      *“...and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”*

We are free to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not use the fact that our salvation has been committed to Him as an occasion for the flesh; we use this as an occasion to serve the Lord. That is what this passage is teaching.

2 Timothy 2

vs. 13      *“If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.”*

Once we become born again, it is no longer in our hands; it is in God’s hands. I may one day say, “I don’t believe in You anymore.” God’s response is, “You may deny Me, but I can’t deny Myself. I am the One Who is guarding your salvation for you. I approached you with My will. You said “yes” by your will, and now it comes back to Me. I guard My will, not yours!”

Paul says, “How do I keep my peace? I keep my eyes focused on the One Who will never forsake me, Who will not turn me loose. I am in His hands. He will not let me go. He has promised me that everything I have committed to Him, He is keeping against that day.”

*“That day”* is again, the day we arrive in heaven.

We are saved because of a past action. We are in a present state of salvation based on a past action and that past action is the fact that we received Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and we are now “in Him”.

## **XII. The Pastor is the Example**

### 2 Timothy 1

vs. 13 *“Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*

vs. 14 *“That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.”*

The phrase “hold fast” literally means “keep on having this form or this pattern or this example of sound words.” Paul is saying, “Timothy, do you want a congregation that is sound? Do you want a congregation that is secure? Do you want a congregation that is genuine; a congregation that is not weird; a congregation that realizes that Christians can miss the mark, sin, and do weird things? Do you want stable believers in your congregation? Then, Timothy, keep holding fast to this form or pattern of sound words.” Sound words come from the Word of God.

The pastor needs to be the example. The pastor should be the example in both word and lifestyle.

### I Timothy 4

vs. 12 *“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”*

In this passage, Paul is encouraging Timothy to be an example before the people.

### Acts 20

vs. 20 *“And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shown you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house.”*

Paul makes reference to also being an example before the people.

### 2 Timothy 2

vs. 2      *“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”*

Paul is telling Timothy, “The things you learned from me, spread that example to others through the Word of God and by your lifestyle of faith and love.”

Paul’s security in the Lord came from his understanding of the Word of God. There is no way we can study the Word of God day after day or study scriptures without the realization that we are kept by the power of God.

Prior to this time, Timothy had not been teaching much of the Word of God. He was emotional and was having problems in his own life. The stability that was in Paul’s life because of the Word had been passed on to Timothy, but Timothy had departed from that stability. Paul is exhorting Timothy, “Got back to it! Be an example before the people. Hold fast to that form, that example, that pattern of sound words that you heard from me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.”

Paul is saying, “Timothy, live the Word, teach it; live it before the people, but understand, you are not alone. The Holy Spirit, which lives in you, was given to help you live and teach this before the congregation.

“Timothy, you know the Word, but you also know what is happening to the people. They need a strong pastor, a strong leader. Be that leader.”

### **XIII. Phygellus and Hermogenes**

vs. 15      *“This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.”*

Paul goes on to share with Timothy about his situation. He said, “Basically I am standing alone. All of the churches that I have helped to establish have turned away from me. Even Phygellus and Hermogenes have turned their backs on me.”

Paul is making reference to two leaders in the church who have helped turn others away from Paul and the Word of God because of Paul's situation in prison. As long as Paul was teaching the Word outside of prison, others taught the Word. But when Paul's situation changed and he was put in prison, they stopped teaching the Word of God. What does Paul being in prison or not being in prison have to do with the truth of the Word? Nothing! Phygellus, Hermongenes, and the others were moved by the circumstances. We should not live for the Lord when the circumstances are good and quit living for Him when the circumstances are bad. The Word does not change because our circumstances change.

Very rarely does Paul mention names when referring to sin. When Paul mentions a specific name, it is when he is writing a letter addressed to an individual and not to a congregation. When it was a letter addressed to an entire congregation, Paul does not mention individual names. A book like Timothy was a letter addressed to an individual pastor. Paul is addressing subjects that he would not address before an entire congregation. In I Corinthians 5:1-5, Paul mentions a man caught in incest, but he never mentions the man's name. Even though the congregation knew who the man was, because the letter was addressed to an entire congregation, Paul did not specifically mention the man's name.

#### **XIV. Onesiphorus**

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vs. 16      *“The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: (imprisonment)”*

Paul mentioned Onesiphorus by name. It did not matter to him that Paul was in prison. He loved Paul. He did not visit Paul in prison as a public display for others to see. His lifestyle was to serve Paul. Apparently, Onesiphorus was an exceptional believer and very mature. This man was fully persuaded of the truth of God's Word and believed in Paul, who taught the truth. He believed that Paul was in prison not for what was being falsely reported about him, but simply because Paul chose to preach and teach the Word of God. Onesiphorus had a house in Ephesus. He had a wife and

children and apparently was a member of the Church at Ephesus.

The Greek word for “refreshed” means “to revive or cheer up”. Paul did not make reference to Onesiphorus bringing him food, or supplies, or having great spiritual conversations with him. He simply says that Onesiphorus “refreshed me”.

Paul says, “I know why others don’t come to visit; they are embarrassed that I am in prison. You don’t even want to come knock on the prison doors and say ‘I’m here to see Paul’, because the moment you do, you will be known as one of my friends and that embarrasses you. Onesiphorus not only came, he was never embarrassed! He would walk up to the gate and say, ‘I’m here to see Paul. I am his friend and I’ve come to tell him what is going on at the church; to talk with him, share with him, uplift him, and encourage him.”

vs. 17 *“But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.”*

Onesiphorus actually had to search to find out where Paul was; to find out which prison he was in.

vs. 18 *“The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.”*

Onesiphorus’ friendship began back in Ephesus. He has consistently been a friend to Paul and it did not matter to him whether Paul was in prison or whether he was out of prison. He was more spiritual than anyone in the congregation, even more spiritual than Timothy.

Even though Phygellus, Hermongenes, and Onesiphorus are all believers, it is difficult to mention them in the same verse because two have turned their backs on Paul and the other is an outstanding Christian.

## 2 Timothy 2

vs. 20 *“But in a great house there are not only vessel of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.”*

There are many vessels in God's house. Some are good, some are great, and some are bad. What we have in Phygellus and Hermogenes is a couple of old dirt pots and in Onesiphorus a golden vessel!

Again, Paul said, "I am persuaded. I was persuaded once and have never needed to be persuaded again." Once we get a revelation of the grace of God and the keeping power of Jesus Christ, it will totally revolutionize our lives. It is like taking all of the weight off and suddenly, we are not serving Him out of fear of losing everything; we are serving Him out of our love for Him. No sin that is bigger than the blood of Jesus Christ. He watches over us to protect us and keep us against that day when we will stand before Him in heaven. Not by my works, not by my failures, and not by my successes, but by the blood of Jesus Christ I will enter into heaven!