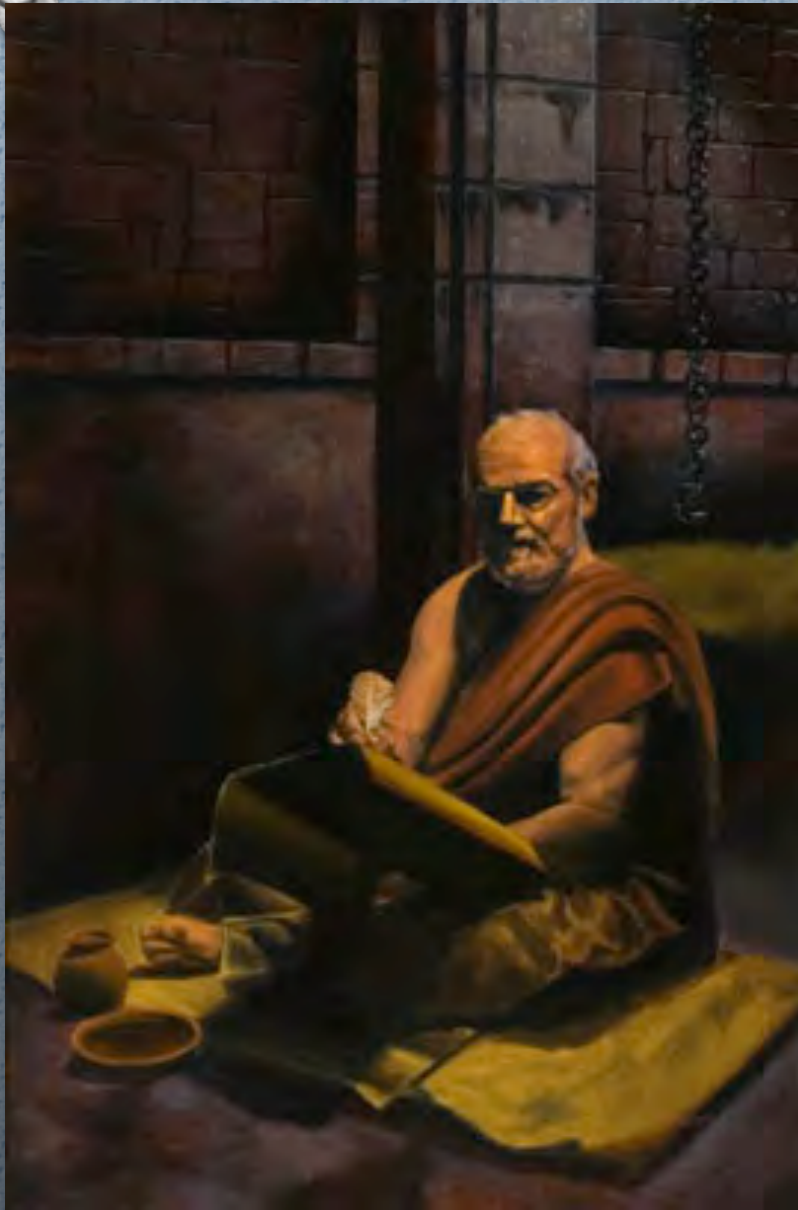


**Standing Strong
in Tough Times:
Paul's Letters to Timothy**

David Feddes



Endure hardship

Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus... There will be terrible times in the last days... I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. (2 Tim 2:3, 3:1, 4:8)

Terrible times

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love [no natural family affection], unforgiving [impossible to make peace with], slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them. (2 Tim 3:1-5)

Rotten religion

... having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power... always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth... these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. (2 Timothy 3:5-8)

Standing strong in tough times

- Times will be evil and people will be evil, but you must be different.
- Paul repeatedly describes how the world will behave in the last days and then says to Timothy, “But you!”

Standing strong

1. Figure on a fight
2. Endure for the elect
3. Stick to Scripture
4. Model your message
5. Teach more teachers
6. Look to the Lord
7. Focus on forever

1. Figure on a fight

Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus... There will be terrible times in the last days... everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. (2 Timothy 2:3; 3:1,12-13)

1. Figure on a fight

Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will. (2 Tim 2:25-26).

2. Endure for the elect

I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 2:10).

Their teaching will spread like gangrene...
Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription:
"The Lord knows those who are his."

(2 Timothy 2:17, 19)

3. Stick to Scripture

Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. (1 Timothy 4:13)

From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:15-17)

3. Stick to Scripture

Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. (2 Timothy 4:2-6)

4. Model your message

Command and teach these things. Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers. (1 Timothy 4:11-12,16)

5. Train more teachers

Appoint elders and deacons whose faith, character, and families are worthy of being reproduced. (1 Timothy 3)

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor. (1 Timothy 5:17)

5. Train more teachers

What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. (2 Tim 1:13-14)

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will also be qualified to teach others. (2 Tim 2:1-2)

6. Look to the Lord

I give you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, holding on to faith and a good conscience.

(1 Timothy 1:18-19)

I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. (2 Timothy 1:6-7)

6. Look to the Lord

I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions. (1 Tim 5:21)

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. (2 Tim 2:8).

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word (2 Tim 3:1-2)

6. Look to the Lord

In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen. (1 Timothy 6:12-16)

7. Focus on forever

Christ Jesus ... has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel... I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day. (2 Timothy 1:10-12)

If we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us. (2 Timothy 2:13).

7. Focus on forever

For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. (2 Tim 4:6-8)

Standing strong

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Paul was beheaded in Rome, according to church historian Eusebius. As a Roman citizen, he could not be crucified.

Delivered from the lion's mouth

At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (2 Timothy 4:16-18)