

What Is The CONTEXT of 2 Timothy 2:15 ?

For many years, this verse has been our theme. We have quoted it as the basis for finding, or making, many separations in God's word. Well, I still believe we should **rightly divide** but I think we should be careful to see if every division we made was right.

Before we get started, I want to make a statement about **referring to the Greek**. It has not been my practice in the past to use it as a 'grace believer.' Some folks claim that if you use it, you are bringing doubt toward the KJV. (And this comes from a group that refuses the KJV word 'bishop' in preference to 'pastor' in 1 Tim 3:1? It seems rather 2-faced to me!) However, in my studies I have actually found the Greek to be helpful (even though not necessary) to clear up doctrines I had been taught in error.

The Greek word <orthotomeao> perfectly translated 'rightly dividing' in our KJV Bible, has the idea of making a straight cut, dissecting smoothly:

2 Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing (Greek word <orthotomeao>) the word of truth.

For a long time, **we have used this verse, but ignored its context** a fault that we would have scolded others for doing.

With 2 Tim 2:15, we have said the main division in the Bible is not between the Old Testament and the New but rather between the Prophecy 'Program' and the Mystery 'Program'.

We have verses about the Old and New Testaments, but to assign separate 'programs' from prophecy and mystery may be extra, unnecessary cutting. Prophecy and mystery are in the Bible, but to designate each of them to be a 'program' is adding to the verse. We'll read through the passage, then go back to look closer at the context.

So I thought it would be interesting to take a fresh look

at 2 Tim 2:15 in its context and as we do

we'll see that it is **surrounded by the issue of RESURRECTION:**

2 Tim 2:7-18 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in **all things**.

8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was **raised from the dead** according to my gospel:

9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds;
but the word of God is not bound.

10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also **obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.**

(That will come at the resurrection
and so will this):

11 It is a faithful saying:

For if we be dead with him,
we shall also live with him:

12 If we suffer,
we shall also reign with him:

if we deny him,
he also will deny us:

13 If we believe not,
yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

14 Of **these things** (What things? The inheritance of believers at the resurrection.) put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting (That Greek word <katastrophe> is used twice in scripture, the other time it is translated 'overthrow') of the hearers.

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;

18 Who **concerning the truth have erred,**
(How?) saying that **the resurrection** is past already;
(What was the result?) and overthrow the faith of some.

In context, people's faith was overthrown because someone taught the resurrection in the wrong place. They did not rightly divide the Word.

Now let's start back with 2 Tim 2:8 concerning the resurrection of Christ:

2 Tim 2:8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was **raised from the dead** according to my gospel:

Paul's very commission the gospel of God which he was **separated** unto was based upon **Christ's resurrection**:

Rom 1:1-5 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, **separated unto the gospel of God**,
 2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)
 3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;
 4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, **by the resurrection from the dead**:
 5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:

Back to 2 Tim 2:8 again, to see that preaching the resurrection is what got Paul in trouble, even to the point of being thrown in jail like a criminal:

2 Tim 2:8-9 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was **raised from the dead** according to my gospel: (the gospel of God, as Rom 1:1)
 9 **Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds**;
 but the word of God is not bound.

Paul was in court in Jerusalem, before the chief priests and all their council, including the high priest Ananias, because he was preaching the resurrection of the dead:

Acts 23:6-7 But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: **of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question**.

7 And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided.

8 For the Sadducees say that there is no **resurrection**, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.

Yes, Paul suffered greatly he even lost everything for Christ.

But that didn't deter him because he had hope of the resurrection:

Phil 3:8-11 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom **I have suffered the loss of all things**, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,
 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 **That I may know** him, and **the power of his resurrection**, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

11 If by any means I might attain unto **the resurrection of the dead**.

There is a lot at stake on this resurrection issue like eternal glory!

All the suffering for Christ would be worthless if not for the resurrection:

1 Cor 15:12-24 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. (When does this all happen? The resurrection will be at the end when Christ comes and sets up the kingdom of God on earth.)

By the way, Paul wasn't the only apostle in bonds for preaching the resurrection. Earlier, Peter and Jesus' other disciples were arrested, too:

Acts 4:1-3 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them,

2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and **preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.**

3 And they laid hands on them, and **put them in hold** unto the next day: for it was now eventide. (After a trial in Acts 4: 15-21, they were released

and commanded not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus

to which they replied they could not refrain.)

Next, back in 2 Tim 2, by God's grace, Paul endured the suffering for the hope of salvation which is the resurrection with eternal glory:

2 Tim 2:10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus **with eternal glory.**

The sufferings of this life are temporary and bearable because the resurrection relates to the glorious salvation we will experience when Christ returns and brings our new body:

2 Cor 4:17-18 For our light **affliction**, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and **eternal weight of glory**;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are **eternal**. (keep reading)

2 Cor 5:1-4 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have **a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.**

2 For in this we groan, **earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:**

3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but **clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.**

Peter also taught the chronicle of events like Paul did:

- 1st comes the suffering through grace
- then afterward comes the eternal glory at the end

when Christ appears and raises the dead:

1 Peter 1:6-11 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are **in heaviness through manifold temptations:**

7 That **the trial of your faith,**

being much more precious than of gold that perisheth,
though it be tried with fire,

might be found unto **praise and honour**

and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

9 Receiving **the end of your faith,**

even the salvation of your souls.

10 Of which **salvation** the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the **grace** that should come unto you:

11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand

- **the sufferings of Christ,**
- **and the glory that should follow.**

God gives grace to believers for the suffering and death

after that Christ will bring glorious resurrection:

1 Peter 5:10-11 But the God of **all grace**, who hath called us **unto his eternal glory** by Christ Jesus, **after that ye have suffered a while**, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

11 To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Likewise, Christ had grace for the suffering in His flesh

and glory on the other side after death in resurrection:

Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the **suffering** of death, crowned with **glory** and honour; that he by the **grace** of God should taste death for every man.

Phil 2:8-9 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto **death**, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath **highly exalted him**, and given him a name which is above every name:

Let's go back to 2 Tim 2:11 to see that we will live with Christ:

2 Tim 2:11 It is a faithful saying:

For if we be dead with him, we shall also **live with him**:

We will live with Christ eternally never to die again:

Rom 6:8-9 Now if we be dead with Christ,
we believe that **we shall also live with him**:

9 Knowing that **Christ being raised from the dead** dieth no more;
death hath no more dominion over him.

After death, Christ resurrected. We will also be resurrected after death:

2 Cor 13:4 For **though he was crucified** through weakness,
yet he liveth by the power of God.

For we also are weak in him,

but **we shall live with him by the power of God** toward you.

At the resurrection, when Christ returns with our glorified body
and we meet Him in the air we will always be with Him:

1 Thess 4:13-17 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no **hope**.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and **the dead in Christ shall rise** first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and **so shall we ever be with the Lord**. (in His personal presence where He live, we will live)

Let's go back to 2 Tim 2:12 the 1st part:

2 Tim 2:12-a If we suffer, we shall also reign with him:

God gave Paul **grace for suffering** in this life:

2 Cor 12:9 And he said unto me, My **grace** is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my **infirmities**, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

After the suffering comes the glory at the resurrection:

Rom 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that **we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified** together.

18 For I reckon that the **sufferings of this present time** are not worthy to be compared with the **glory which shall be revealed** in us.

19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. **(at the resurrection)**

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. **(at resurrection)**

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, **the redemption of our body. (the resurrection)**

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? **(our hope is resurrection after suffering)**

25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

We should not let suffering get us down in this present evil world:

1 Thess 3:3 That no man should be moved by these **afflictions:**
for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

It sounds a bit like what Jesus prepared His disciples for, huh?

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that **in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer;** I have overcome the world.

Paul taught that believers would suffer an **obvious sign** of who we are:

Phil 1:28-29 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries:

which is **to them an evident token of perdition,**

but to you of salvation, and that of God.

29 For **unto you it is given** in the behalf of Christ,

not only to believe on him, but also **to suffer for his sake;**

The unbelievers persecute the believers and when Christ returns,

He will make war against His enemies for persecuting His saints.

Here again **we have the suffering then the glory that follows:**

2 Thess 1:4-10 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God
for your patience and faith

in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

5 Which is **a manifest token** of the righteous judgment of God,

that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God,

for which ye also **suffer:**

6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God

to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

7 And to you who are troubled rest with us,

when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven

with his mighty angels,

8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God,

and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction

from the presence of the Lord,

and from the glory of his power;

10 **When he shall come to be glorified in his saints,**

and to be admired in all them that believe

(because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

In between 2 Tim 3:1 **in the last days** and 2 Tim 4:1

at the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ we are told by Paul:

2 Tim 3:12 Yea, and **all that will live godly in Christ Jesus**
shall suffer persecution.

we will share in His comfort, His salvation:

2 Cor 1:7 And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as **ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.**

Peter also wrote the same principal the suffering, then the glory:

1 Pet 4:13 But rejoice, inasmuch as **ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings**; that, **when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad** also with exceeding joy.

Yes, after the suffering comes the resurrection and **reigning**:

Rev 20:4-6 And I saw **thrones**, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. **This is the first resurrection.** (That means 'this is the 1st resurrection.' That means there was not a **secret, mystery resurrection before this resurrection** because this is the 1st resurrection. Did you get that?)

6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and **shall reign with him** a thousand years.

Don't forget that Paul said the saints shall judge the world:

1 Cor 6:2 Do ye not know that **the saints shall judge the world?** and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

Turn back to the last part of 2 Tim 2:12:

2 Tim 2:12-b if we deny him, he also will deny us:

That's what Jesus told His disciples when He was with them:

Matt 10:33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

Back to 2 Tim 2:13 I've wondered and struggled about this verse:

2 Tim 2:13 If we believe not <apisteo>, yet he abideth faithful:
he cannot deny himself.

Then I recently looked at a Greek lexicon to get the meaning of <apisteo>.

It said: to betray a trust, **to be unfaithful**, to disbelieve.

To depend on someone who is unfaithful especially in the 'last days' will be sad:

Prov 25:19 Confidence in an **unfaithful** man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

Just a few verses earlier in 2 Tim 2, Paul told Timothy:

2 Tim 2:2 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 was thankful for faithful men that helped him in the ministry.

2 Tim 2:14 Of **these things** put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.

Now with all **these things in context** let's read 2 Tim 2:15 again:

2 Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing** the word of truth.

2 Tim 2:16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

Paul warned Timothy about the same thing in his 1st epistle to him:

1 Tim 6:20-21 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

21 Which some **professing** have **erred concerning the faith**.

Grace be with thee. Amen.

Why is it important to **rightly divide** the word of truth? **In the context:**

2 Tim 2:17-18 And their word will eat as doth a canker: (gnaw like an ulcer) of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;

18 Who **concerning the truth have erred**,
 (What doctrine did they get wrong?)
 saying that **the resurrection** is past already;
 (What effect did that have on people?)
 and **overthrow the faith** of some.

Some men taught that the resurrection was over, and they had missed it.

Can you imagine all the people who believe in a **pre-tribulation rapture**?

What will they think when the the mark of the beast is set up in the middle of Daniel's 70th week and they're still here on planet earth?

They will think they have missed the so-called rapture (that is not found in our KJV Bible. They will think they must not have been saved. Their faith will be overthrown.

It is plainly clear that the day of Christ will not come or even be near

.... until 'these things' happen first:

- the falling away and
- the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition
 who will sit in God's temple and proclaim himself to be God
 (the abomination of desolation):

2 Thess 2:1-10 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that **the day of Christ** is at hand.

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for **that day** (what day? **the day of Christ**) **shall not come**, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

6 And now ye know what withholdeth that **he (the man of sin) might be revealed** in his time. (the man of sin will withhold his true identity, masquerading as a man of peace --- until the abomination of desolation)

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only **he (the man of sin)** who now letteth will let, until **he (the man of sin)** be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall **that Wicked (the man of sin) be revealed**, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

Our resurrection will be at the last trump:

1 Cor 15:51-52 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **(When?) at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**

I encourage you to find a series of trumpets in the Bible then find the LAST one.

We 'grace preachers' have re-arranged many issues in our quest to rightly divide. We used 2 Tim 2:15 as a **springboard** to divide **alot**.

In this study we looked at 2 Tim 2:15 in its context and saw that it had to do with **the correct timing of the resurrection.**

I'm afraid the 'rapture theory' has mis-led alot of people.

This is David Dowell, saying, "Think about it!"