

## In The Grip Of His Grace 2

# No Shortcuts or Lowering the Bar!

## II Timothy 1:13-18



Focused Living

Several years ago, after much careful planning, Perry decided to build a 16x8 foot platform under his house for additional storage. ‘Master carpenter’ Perry was getting downright cocky as the project progressed faster, cost less, and looked more professional than anticipated. That is, until he decided to take a few shortcuts. When it was time to cut the decking of dozens of similar sized boards he measured the first board to its exact length then, unwisely, cut each board using the previous one rather than the original measurement. Each subsequent board was about 1/4 of an inch shorter than the last one. By the time he was finished cutting 60 boards, 59 were too short and useless! By stupidly taking a *shortcut*, he *cut short* the quality and increased the cost of the project, forcing him to basically start over. **Why do men take shortcuts or lower the bar of our standards? What shortcuts have you taken? Any positive outcomes? Negative? Anyone else feel the pain/pleasure of the results?**

**(2 Tim 1:13; 2:2; 3:14; I Tim 4:15; 1 Cor 11:1; 2 Thes 2:15)**

Throughout the centuries God’s work has been done by those who have surrendered/submitted to God’s Word refusing to take shortcuts. So Paul challenges us to take the measurements of our manhood from the original board, Jesus Himself and not from other men/standards that fall short of the truth of Scripture. Paul commands us to “*retain the standard (pattern) of sound words which you have heard...*” *Hupo* (under) + *topos* (sketch) literally means to make an exact sketch or drawing under the original. Remember as a kid how you would lay a clean sheet of paper over a pattern and rub the crayon over it to create the exact pattern? Paul is saying, “*Hey, remember the words and life principles of God’s truth that we have passed on to you! Don’t cave in and compromise by settling for less. Trace the exact truth of our lives into yours so the next generation can do the same.*” In what 2-3 areas do you need to better trace the exact pattern of Scripture God has laid out before you with “*faith*” and “*love*” so that you will not be tempted to take shortcuts?

**(2 Tim 1:15; 4:10, 16)** What usually happens when we take shortcuts in the basics of following Christ?

**(2 Tim 1:16-18; I Sam 18:1-4; Prov 17:17; 18:24; Heb 10:23-25)** Many men walk in and out of your life, but only a few leave footprints! Each of us needs to have an older ‘**Paul**’ to challenge us, a peer ‘**Onesiphorus**’ to encourage us and a younger ‘**Timothy**’ whom we can nurture in the faith to grow straight and strong. Who is your...  
**Paul=**

**Jonathan=**

**Timothy=**

What can you do to have these men in your life and become these men to others?

**(2 Tim 1:16-18)** Onesiphorous (“burden” + “pleasure” = a pleasure to carry your burdens) was a man who helped Paul keep his standards high and not cave in or take shortcuts as he sat alone in the Roman dungeon awaiting his execution. The big “O”

1. **Refreshed** (*‘breathe gently on a wound’; ‘cool off a burn*) Who in your life is wounded and needs to be refreshed mentally, physically, emotionally, relationally, financially or spiritually?

2. **Not ashamed** He was not embarrassed to identify with Paul though he could have been tossed into prison for associating. Anybody you know who could use a friend to approach him instead of retreat from him during a time of failure, embarrassment or disfigurement?

3. **Eagerly searched** He took the initiative to search for Paul having traveled 600 miles at his own expense leaving his family for weeks in Ephesus. Know anybody whom you need to seek after as they have been out of the loop, off the radar or out of sight as of late?

4. **Found** He treated Paul as a valuable ‘*treasure.*’ Anybody you know whom others have given up on or consider as not valuable but down deep you know there is hope for them in Christ?

5. **Services** Know anybody who you can simply serve and give yourself to in the name of Christ?

**TAG TEAM** What truth will you make a part of your life?