What to Remember When Life Feels Out of Control

Pastor Mike Breaux · Fight The Good Fight · 2 Timothy 2:8; 2 Timothy 2:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:11-13; 2 Timothy 2:14; 2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Timothy 2:16-17

AT A GLANCE

Facing a church fraying with conflict, false teaching, and his own imprisonment, Paul gives Timothy not seven strategies but one imperative: remember Jesus Christ. Pastor Mike Breaux traces how that single command — grounded in the resurrection and kingship of Jesus — dismantles the anxiety of self-rule and reframes suffering, limitation, and truth-telling around a person rather than a program.

- When life turns chaotic and complex, Paul gives Timothy one command, not seven strategies: remember Jesus Christ, who is the who, what, and why.
- Anxiety is often the delusion that you sit on the throne; remembering that Jesus reigns and is alive breaks that illusion.
- Truth defended without love becomes catastrophic — cutting a clear path to Jesus matters more than winning an argument.

> *"He's the who, he's the what, he's the where, he's the how, and he is the why of your life."*

EXPOSITION

Scripture engaged

2 Timothy 2:8 — Remember Jesus Christ. He is from the family of David. After Jesus died, he was raised from death. This is the Good News that I tell people. (ERV)

2 Timothy 2:9-10 — 9And because I tell that message, I am suffering. I am even bound with chains like someone who has really done wrong. But God's message is not bound. 10So I patiently accept all these troubles. I do this to help the people God has chosen so that they can have the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. With this salvation comes glory that never ends. (ERV)

2 Timothy 2:11-13 — 11If we died with him, we will also live with him. 12If we remain faithful even in suffering, we will also rule with him. If we refuse to say we know him, he will refuse to say he knows

> us. [13]If we are not faithful, he will still be faithful, because he cannot be false to himself. (ERV)
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> 2 Timothy 2:14 — Keep on telling everyone these truths. And warn them before God not to argue about words. Such arguments don't help anyone, and they ruin those who listen to them. (ERV)
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> 2 Timothy 2:15 — Do your best to be the kind of person God will accept, and give yourself to him. Be a worker who has no reason to be ashamed of his work, one who applies the true teaching in the right way. (ERV)
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> 2 Timothy 2:16-17 — [16]Stay away from people who talk about useless things that are not from God. That kind of talk will lead a person more and more against God. [17]Their evil teaching will spread like a sickness inside the body. Hymenaeus and Philetus are men like that. (ERV)

The argument

One Command Instead of Seven Strategies — Why Paul narrows Timothy's crisis to a single imperative

Timothy is buried under conflict, spreading false teaching, defections, and Paul's own imprisonment — by any leadership logic he needs a plan. Pastor Mike Breaux notes that many mentors would have handed him a checklist, but Paul gives one word: remember Jesus Christ. Not a program to fix the church, staff a team, or answer every critic — just remembering. Breaux unpacks it: "He's the who, he's the what, he's the where, he's the how, and he is the why of your life." When the mind fills with noise, he says, "we tend to forget what really, really matters," and the cure is not more strategy but redirection — one direction that changes everything.

> **Insight —** *When complexity multiplies, the first fix is not another strategy but returning attention to Christ himself.*

The Empty Tomb as the Ground of Everything Possible — Davidic lineage and resurrection power braided into one identity

Paul tells Timothy to remember that Jesus, "a descendant of King David, was raised from the dead" — Breaux reads the pairing as deliberate, kingship and resurrection held together. The Davidic line marks Jesus as the promised deliverer; the resurrection proves death doesn't win: "Jesus kicked the end out of the tomb and made it a tunnel from life to life for anybody who will put their trust in him." He links this to Paul's prayer elsewhere that believers would know "the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead" is now at work in them. For Breaux, this single verse displaced grace as the letter's most vital line this week.

> **Insight —** *Confidence that anything is possible rests not on circumstance but on the claim that the tomb is empty and the throne is occupied.*

Anxiety as the Delusion of Self-Rule — "Mike Almighty" and the throne only Jesus can hold

Breaux confesses that under stress — schedule chaos, disappointing people, plans unraveling — "I have a tendency to act like everything depends upon me… I start acting like I am Mike Almighty." He names the pattern plainly: "What I'm learning about anxiety — this is not always true, but a lot of times it's nothing more than the delusion that I am in charge." Remembering that Jesus is alive comes easily; remembering that Jesus is in charge is harder. The correction isn't more effort but abdication: "You need to come down off that throne because I already have somebody doing that job, and his name is not Mike, his name is Jesus."

> **Insight —** *Much anxiety is less a problem of circumstance than a false claim to a throne that was never yours to occupy.*

The Word Cannot Be Chained — Paul's imprisonment reframed as investment in someone else's eternity

Paul writes from a cold cell, chained "like a criminal" for preaching the resurrection, yet insists "the word of God cannot be chained." Breaux traces this into Paul's willingness to "endure anything if it will bring salvation and eternal glory" to others, generalizing it: "somebody else's eternity may be on the other side of my faithfulness." He points to those in the room limited by age or illness — in wheelchairs, with walkers and canes — still serving, insisting limitation doesn't limit God: "just because you might be slowing down doesn't mean God is." He then quotes the worship-song fragment Paul embeds: "if we die with him we will also live with him… he remains faithful, for he cannot deny who he is."

> **Insight —** *Faithful endurance under real limitation still carries weight, because God's power was never contingent on our capacity.*

Correct Doctrine Without Love Becomes Catastrophe — The word behind "ruin" and the difference between defending truth and defending ego

Paul tells Timothy to stop the church "fighting over words," because such arguments "are useless and they can ruin those who hear them." Breaux notes the Greek behind "ruin" is catastrophe — "to wreck or tear down" — and pairs it with the gangrene image Paul uses for false teaching: "it's like a cancer… it spreads and takes people out a piece at a time." He distinguishes truth-telling from ego: "some people really aren't interested in defending the truth as much as they are bolstering their ego… we can prove our point and destroy our witness." Paul's charge to "correctly handle the word of truth," Breaux says, literally means to "cut a clear path," not merely to be right.

> **Insight —** *Being right and being loving are not the same contest, and losing the second while winning the first is its own catastrophe.*

Cross-references

- Ephesians 1:19-20 — quoted to show the same resurrection power is now at work in believers
- Isaiah 40:6-8 — quoted to show God's word outlasts every human attempt to destroy it
- John 15:5 — cited to explain remaining in Jesus as the ground of remembering him
- Psalm 139:23-24 — prayed personally during his retreat to expose what was 'clunking' in his heart
- Acts 7:55-56 — recalled through Paul's memory of Stephen's stoning to underscore that Jesus is alive and enthroned

DEVOTIONAL

There is a particular kind of tiredness that has nothing to do with sleep. It is the tiredness of a mind so full — of schedules, of arguments, of things that must be fixed by Tuesday — that it forgets why it walked into the room in the first place. Into that fog Paul does not send a checklist. He sends a name. Remember Jesus. Not his teachings first, not his methods, not even his church — just him: the one whose tomb stands empty, whose lineage runs back to a king, whose power now moves in whatever weakness you bring to it. It is strange comfort to hear a man in chains say the word cannot be chained, stranger still to hear him call his own suffering a gift to someone else's eternity. But maybe that is the shape grace always takes — not the removal of the cell, but the discovery that the cell was never the whole story. And maybe the throne you have been white-knuckling, the one marked "fix everything," was never built for you to sit on. Somewhere between the empty tomb and the empty argument, between the gangrene of a defended ego and the light of a life truly lived, there is a quieter path — one cut clear, Paul says, not shouted loud. It leads, always, back to a person. Not a philosophy to master. Not a movement to win. A living, reigning Jesus, patient enough to meet you in a 102-degree week when the cool mountains would have been easier, and faithful enough to remain faithful even when you are not.

Reflection

- What noise in your life right now is drowning out the simple act of remembering Jesus before anything else?
- Where have you been quietly acting as though you sit on the throne, trying to fix or control what was never yours to hold?
- Is there a truth you've been defending in a way that wounds rather than draws someone toward the light of Christ?

Closing prayer

Jesus, thank you for the reminder today of who you are and what you've done. We don't want remembering you to be an occasional thing — we want to stay connected to you, to keep the main thing the main thing. Forgive us for the times we try to take the throne, running and fixing everything ourselves. Help us be strong in the grace you give, knowing your power is made perfect in our weakness. Thank you for every person listening — you know everything about them, and you love them in spite of everything. Let them have an encounter with you today. In your name, amen.

FORMATION

One thing to remember

Before you try to fix anything today, remember Jesus — his empty tomb and his throne are the ground beneath you.

This week

This week, take one unhurried stretch of time — even twenty minutes — to pray Psalm 139:23-24, asking God to search your heart, and name in writing one thing crowding out your remembrance of Jesus. Hand it to him in prayer rather than trying to fix it yourself.

Return to Psalm 139:23-24