

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”**  
**May 26, 2016**

- ✓ **1 Chronicles 18:1–20:8.** David defeated his enemies and ruled with virtue.
- ✓ **2 Timothy 2:1–13.** The pastor: a soldier, an athlete, and a farmer.
- ✓ **Psalms 85.** Loyal love-Truth are in harmony.

**COMMENTS:**

**1 Chronicles 18:1–20:8.** This section of Scripture provides a survey of David’s military victories over the enemies of Israel. In our last study I noted that it was the standard ethic in the Old Testament as well as in classical Roman culture, Greek culture, and in the New Testament that a ruler must have virtue before he can govern with integrity. The idea that someone who does not have integrity has the ability to govern righteously is a chimera. We see the Old Testament ethos in 18:14: *So David reigned over all Israel, and administered judgment and justice to all his people.* All men have a sense of right and wrong due to the interplay of the human immaterial intellect and will with first principles and self-reflection. Even evil people see their evil as a good. Let me turn to my previous illustration of Commodus in “Gladiator.” Recall when Marcus Aurelius told Commodus that he would not be the ruler to succeed him, and how Commodus immediately knew why and retorted that he may not have had the “virtues” that his father longed for, but he had other virtues like ambition, which could be a virtue if it drives one to excel. Note the recognition even by Commodus, who was rotten by any estimation, of the human goal or telos of “excellence,” which is just another name for virtue.

**2 Timothy 2:1–13.** After Paul tells Timothy to entrust the teaching of God’s Word to faithful men (πιστοῖς ἀνθρώποις), who will also be qualified (ἱκανοὶ) to teach others, he exhorts him to prepare for coming hardships as a pastor. Note the three images Paul uses to illustrate the hard work and dedication of a pastor-teacher: a soldier, an athlete, and a farmer. The soldier speaks of the single-minded purpose, rigorous discipline, and unquestioning obedience to his commanding officer (4). The athlete analogy also speaks of discipline, self-control, endurance, and a certain toughness. Competitors in the Olympic games, for example, were required to swear that they had trained diligently for at least 10 months. This illustration adds the incentive of winning the crown and fear of being disqualified. The final image is that of a farmer. This figure places emphasis on “hardworking,” in contrast with idle, lazy workers. In this case learning is its own rewards just as a farmer is first to enjoy his crops.

**Psalm 85.** The psalmist acknowledged the goodness of God in restoring His people and forgiving their sins. He then prayed that the Lord would remove His wrath from His people. The psalmist's confidence in the Lord came from God's promise of salvation. One of the most beautiful statements in the Bible is in verse 10: *Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed.* While the English puts "and" before "mercy" and "truth," in the Hebrew there is no "and." It is just mercy-truth (תְּחִנָּה-אֱמֶת), showing that they are always connected. God's mercy is always connected to His truth; and His truth is always connected with His mercy. They are in perfect harmony. God's is full of mercy (רַחֲמִים), which is better translated "loyal love," without ever adjusting His truth. Just as the rest of the verse shows that God's peace is extended without compromising His righteousness—which is why He provides grace.

*Romans 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.*

Pastor Don