

2 Timothy 2:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

Analysis

Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

After presenting three metaphors (soldier, athlete, farmer), Paul calls for reflection. "Consider" (noei, νοέι) is imperative from noeō (νοέω), meaning "think carefully about, ponder, meditate on." This isn't casual reading but intensive reflection seeking to grasp implications. Paul doesn't merely dispense information but expects Timothy to wrestle with applications.

"What I say" (ha legō, ἃ λέγω) refers to the preceding metaphors and their implications. Each metaphor emphasizes different aspects of faithful ministry: soldiers endure hardship and obey orders; athletes compete according to rules; farmers labor patiently for delayed reward. Together they present comprehensive vision of ministry requiring sacrifice, integrity, and perseverance.

Yet human insight alone is insufficient: "the Lord give thee understanding in all things" (dōsei gar soi ho kyrios synesin en pasin, δώσει γάρ σοι ὁ κύριος σύνεσιν ἐν πᾶσιν). The noun synesis (σύνεσις) denotes spiritual insight, discernment, wisdom to apply truth rightly. Paul prays for divine illumination—the same Lord who inspired Scripture must open minds to understand it (Luke 24:45, 1 Corinthians 2:14).

Historical Context

Ancient education emphasized memorization and recitation, but true education required reflection and application. Greek paideia (education) aimed at forming character, not merely transmitting information. Jewish rabbis expected disciples to meditate (hagah) on Torah day and night (Psalm 1:2), internalizing truth until it shaped behavior. Similarly, Paul expects Timothy to meditate on apostolic teaching until its principles transform ministry practice.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How much time do you spend meditating on Scripture versus merely reading it quickly or hearing sermons passively?
2. When reading the Bible, do you consciously ask the Holy Spirit for understanding, or do you rely solely on your natural intellect?
3. What practical applications from the soldier/athlete/farmer metaphors should you implement in your Christian life and ministry?

Interlinear Text

νόει	α	λέγω·	δώη	γάρ	σοι	ὁ	κύριος	σύνεσις
Consider	what	I say	give	and	thee	^{G3588}	the Lord	understanding
G3539	G3739	G3004	G1325	G1063	G4671		G2962	G4907

ἐν	πᾶσιν
in	all things
G1722	G3956

Additional Cross-References

1 John 5:20 (Parallel theme): And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

James 1:5 (Parallel theme): If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

Luke 24:45 (Parallel theme): Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

John 14:26 (Parallel theme): But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Colossians 1:9 (Parallel theme): For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

John 16:13 (Parallel theme): Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

1 Timothy 4:15 (Parallel theme): Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

Luke 21:15 (Parallel theme): For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

James 3:17 (Parallel theme): But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

Hebrews 13:7 (Parallel theme): Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.