

DONALD J. WILLS
SENIOR PASTOR

OCTOBER
2019

COMMUNITY

IT'S TIME



ADULT CONNECT
CLASS CURRICULUM



The purpose of First Baptist Church of Fort Worth is to **introduce** people into a loving relationship with Jesus, **instruct** them in spiritual growth through God's Word, **inspire** them to serve for God's kingdom, and **incorporate** them in authentic worship to glorify God.

A Note From Our Pastor

Dear FBC family and friends,

The study of 2 Timothy should challenge each of us in our daily walk by emphasizing the importance of discipling or mentoring others in the faith. Paul challenges his son in the ministry to take what he has learned from him and invest it in others. This is what discipleship is. We take what we have learned through God's Word and on our journey with Christ and then share it with others, so that they may grow and become the follower of Christ that will then invest in someone else to the glory of God.

As a reminder, the layout of this Curriculum begins with a 7-day approach for both the teacher and the members to get the most from each study. We also acknowledge that teachers may have their own methods for preparing the lessons and we encourage them to prepare in the way that makes them most effective in presenting God's Word and the weekly lesson. We also encourage each teacher and member to use the suggested 7-day approach for their own personal study and encouragement.

Who was the last person that you shared the lessons you have learned in life, particularly those lessons that are rooted in your faithful practice of Scripture both doctrinally and practically? We should seek opportunity each day to invest the truth of Christ in someone. Whether it is a family member, coworker, friend, or simply someone you meet for the first time. As we go on our life's journey every day, we need to make disciples. Accept the challenge!

-Blessings
Pastor Don



Suggested Plan for Using this Bible Study Guide Effectively

Introduce

Day 1: Read and meditate on the Scripture, asking God to guide you throughout the week as you study His Word and allowing Him to speak to you through the Spirit. Read the **INTRODUCE** portion of the lesson commentary.

Instruct

Day 2: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and read the **INSTRUCT** portion of the lesson commentary. Concentrate on memorizing the focal verse for that particular week.

Day 3: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and answer the focal questions in the **INSTRUCT** portion of the lesson commentary.

Inspire

Day 4: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and begin thinking about tangible ways you can incorporate the principles you learned in your daily life. Read the **INSPIRE** portion of the lesson commentary.

Incorporate

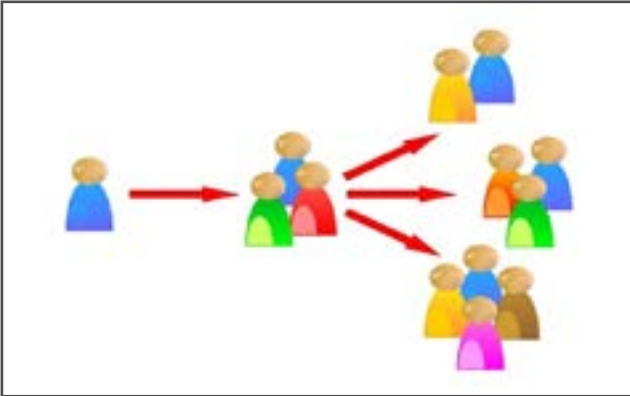
Day 5: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and apply the theological principle that you learned from this week in a tangible way. Use the **INCORPORATE** portion of the lesson commentary to guide you.

Day 6: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and in the journal section describe how God allowed you to apply this passage in a real and tangible way this week.

Day 7: Review the Scripture and share with others in your Connect Class on Sunday morning at 9:30am. Be ready to share your experience about how God allowed you to apply the lesson for that week.

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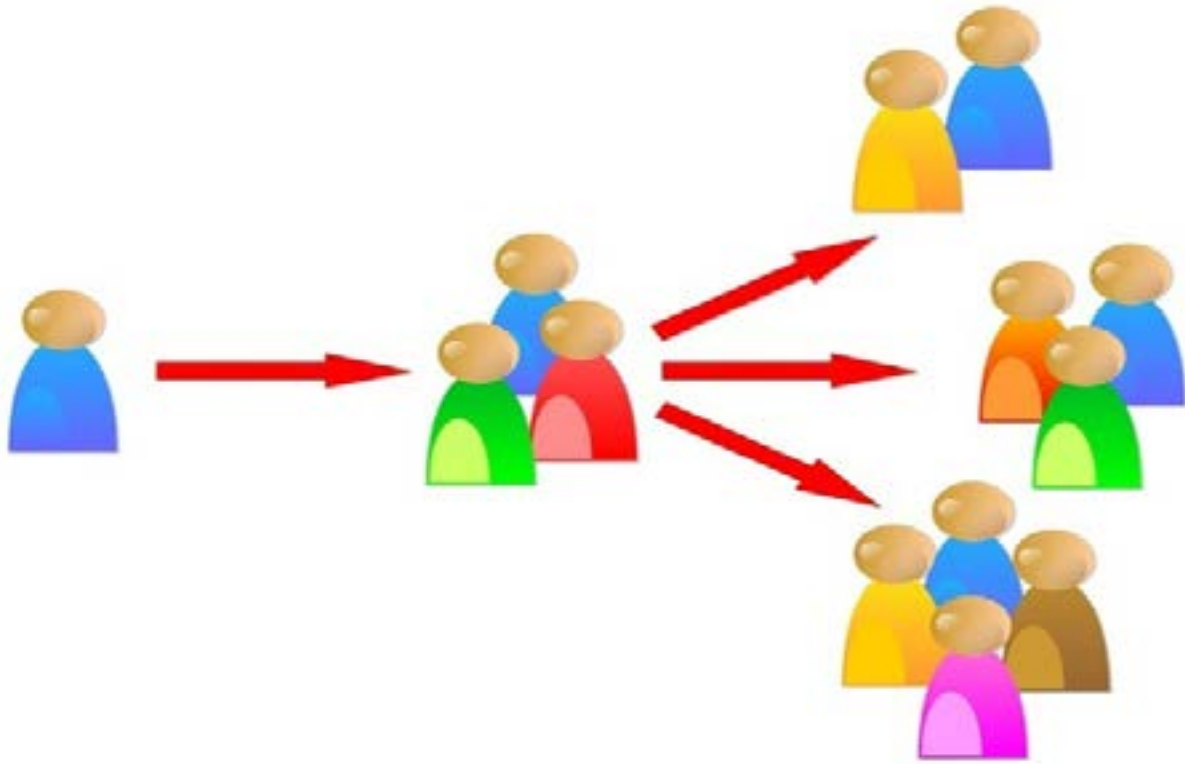


October 27, 2019

Remind Others of the Truth

[2 Timothy 2:11-19](#)

October 6, 2019



Reproduce Disciples

2 Timothy 1:1-7

Focal Verse:

“When I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.”

2 Timothy 1:5

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Introduce

During the nineteenth century, many children learned to carry on the work or trade of their parents by studying under them as an apprentice; therefore, families passed down their legacies through multiple generations who inherited the family business. During the twentieth century, trade or vocational schools opened their doors in order to teach students specific skills for a particular line of work which typically culminated with an internship. The goal of becoming an apprentice was to learn the necessary skills and techniques to run a successful business while at the same time maturing in their trade to pass it on to the next generation. If one failed to teach the next generation and reproduce capable laborers, the family business would become defunct or dead.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the Smyth family already had a long history of working as blacksmiths. Roger Smyth even owned his own shop on the outskirts of Washington, DC. As his first-born son Richard became a teen, Roger began to teach him the methods that his father had taught him and his grandfather before him for many generations. Richard took a great interest and learned quickly. He learned how to build a proper fire,



how to use the bellows, how to separate impurities from the different metals in order to produce a stronger product, and how to use the various tools more effectively. He learned the different techniques to bend certain metals into shape, such as how hot they must be, how quickly they cool, and how to hit them with the right force and pressure.

After Richard learned all he could from his father, he received the freedom to operate the shop on his own. Although he still made mistakes at times, he learned from them and corrected them. Through his own experience, he also discovered different tricks and techniques that helped him become more efficient and effective. Soon, Richard grew into a young man and had a family of his own. Just as his father had with him, he started to mentor his son.

In Christ, we must teach the next generation and prepare them to serve the Lord by

Introduce

passing down the necessary skills to walk with Him as His disciple. We need to invest in future generations to equip them with the knowledge they need from Scripture to utilize the spiritual gifts that God has graciously given them to use for His service. We should guide them step-by-step, provide an example for them to follow, and impart wisdom from our own experience that God has allowed us to have. After teaching them from God's Word and sharing with them practical tips from our own experience, we need to give them the freedom to be used by God without hovering over them and constantly doing things for them. We can certainly assist them as they mature, but we need to allow God to use them so that they too will learn to reproduce disciples in the next generation. As a community, we need to reproduce disciples so that they will continue the family business of serving the Lord, sharing the gospel, and walking in the truth of Scripture daily.

Key
Question

From Scripture, what does it mean to "make disciples?"

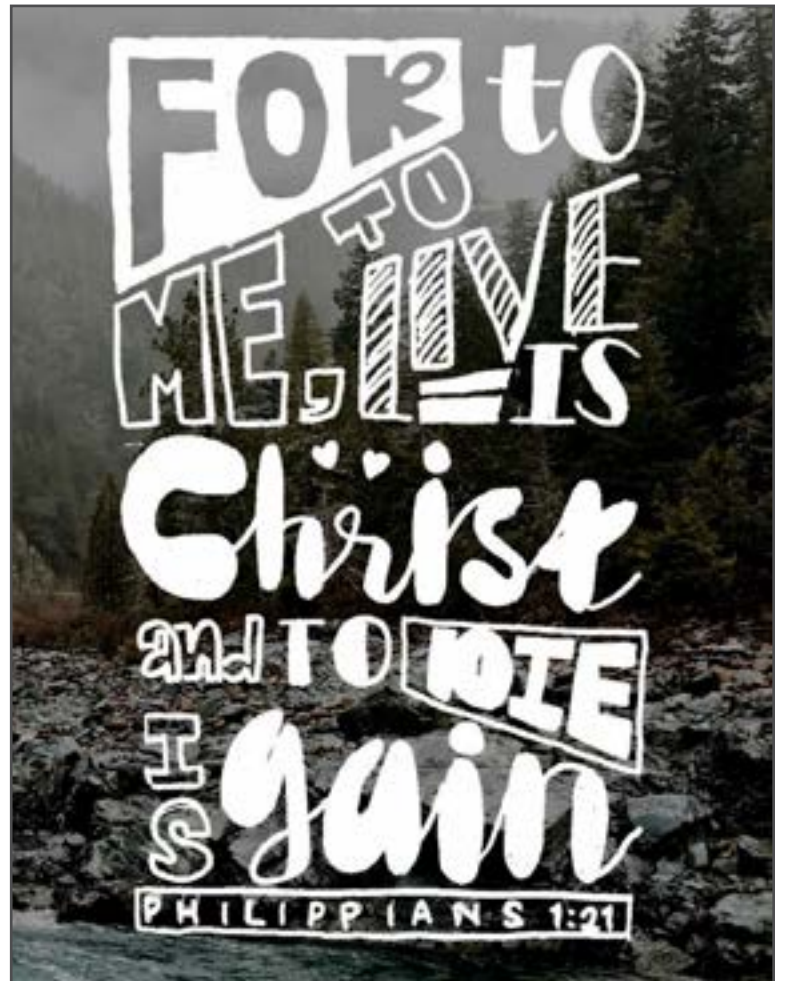
2 Timothy 1:1-2

THE GRACE OF OUR CALLING:

As he sits in prison awaiting his execution (see [2 Tim 4:6-8](#)), Paul opens his final letter to Timothy by imparting lasting words of wisdom from the Lord and reminding him of the importance of remaining faithful to his calling. His greeting similarly follows those in his other letters, but this one particularly emphasizes Paul's calling as **an apostle of Jesus Christ** and **the promise of life** we have in Him (v. 1). We may glance over these greetings and not give them much thought just like we would a salutation in an e-mail today. However, they contain a wealth of theological information.

First, it reminds Paul, and Timothy for that matter, of the **grace** of his calling **by the will of God**. Paul has no ordinary task; he has a divine calling from the Lord to proclaim the gospel! Technically, an **apostle** refers to a messenger who communicates on behalf of a superior. As God's messenger through the inspired and authoritative office of an **apostle**, Paul bears witness to the power of the gospel by communicating it to unreached people. In addition, he also takes time to mentor Timothy and encourage him to continue in that same ministry!

Second, we can clearly see the content of his message: **the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus**. With the end of his earthly journey swiftly approaching because he will be executed under emperor Nero, Paul knows that his life is actually just beginning. Paul doesn't look upon his chains with despair, he doesn't fear his circumstances, and he doesn't dread his future. The gospel, or **promise of Christ**, has given him hope because he recognizes that something greater will come when he sees his Savior face to face ([1 Cor 13:12](#))! Just



Instruct

as he ponders in Philippians 1:21, he now understands, “For me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” Therefore, Paul has begun to get his earthly affairs in order by encouraging Timothy to continue the fight and remain faithful until Christ returns or calls him home too.

As believers, what should our lasting legacy be?

Question
1

Although God hasn’t called us to the exact same ministry as Paul, He has placed a divine call on our lives by giving us a spiritual gift to use for His service to share the gospel and build His kingdom through the local church. In ministry, we all have the same goal even though we have a diverse number of gifts working together in unity: we must walk worthy of our calling by honoring Christ through our holy lifestyle and faithfully proclaiming His Word to the world around us as His ambassadors ([Eph 4:1](#)). For those who have a relationship with Christ, we have nothing to fear; despite whatever we may endure in life, we can be confident in the final outcome!

We know that eternal **life** in Christ awaits us; therefore, we can live boldly for Christ in the way that we behave and the way that we speak the truth found in His Word! Just as Paul says in [Romans 1:16](#), we can confidently say today, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.” Let us, therefore, live as Paul did by reminding ourselves daily of **the promise of life** found in **Christ Jesus**, so that we can remain focused on our task and faithful to our divine calling!

How has God called you to serve in sharing the gospel and building this local body of believers?

Question
2

Next, Paul directs his attention toward the recipient, **Timothy**, whom he describes as **a beloved son** (v. 2). Although Timothy likely came to faith in Christ through the influence of his mother and grandmother (see v. 5), Paul sees himself as a father-like figure who has invested in him and trained him in the ministry. As a father, Paul taught Timothy correct doctrine from Scripture, provided an example for him to follow, gave him practical, hands-on experience by inviting him to join him on his second missionary journey as an intern, and now he has relinquished the reins and given him the opportunity to apply what he has learned in a ministry of his own. Yet, Paul still

stands ready to give guidance, encourage his personal growth, provide correction if needed, and interject godly counsel when asked, but he trusts him implicitly and gives him the freedom to practice his own ministry as led by the Spirit.

As children grow, parents' roles may change slightly from provider, to administrator, to teacher, to disciplinarian, and to counselor—in no particular order—but one thing always remains the same: parents should serve as a godly role model, offering stability and wise counsel from Scripture even as their children become adults. To their adult children, parents no longer dictate or attempt to live vicariously through them, but they allow them to stand on their own two feet and manage their own affairs as they have been taught. Parents shouldn't hover over their adult children and attempt to manage their lives for them. However, they certainly should provide support and guidance when asked and needed.

How do some view ministry in the church like an overprotective and domineering parent? How does this attitude hinder the growth of the church?

Question
3

Why do we fail to train and counsel others to function independently when mentoring in the church? We frequently fail to take people along on the journey with us! Even when we attempt to train them, we end up doing the ministry ourselves—either because we view it as *our* job or because we don't trust that the Lord will work through them as He has us. We never give them ownership of the ministry even when they are fully equipped and ready to lead. On the contrary, we need to follow Paul's example with Timothy; we need to train others, equip them for ministry, and then allow God to work through them just as He has us over the years.

Just as the Lord had done for Paul, He has also given Timothy **grace, mercy, and peace** through the transformative power of the gospel and will use him mightily if he fully surrenders to Him as well.



Likewise, we need to remind ourselves of the content of the gospel which declares

Instruct

the message of salvation through Christ, but we must also recall how God uses us collectively as His people to accomplish His will. When we do, this underscores the necessity of training and equipping future generations as disciples who will faithfully continue the work of ministry by reaching the world and investing in others.

2 Timothy 1:3-4

THE GUARDING OF OUR CONSCIENCE:

Paul continues his letter to Timothy as he breaks into a spontaneous prayer of thanksgiving to **God whom** he serves **with a pure conscience** just **as his forefathers did** (v. 3). We primarily think of the **conscience** as the central venue that helps us to distinguish between right and wrong. By all accounts, Paul did lead an exceptional life characterized by righteousness, but in this context the phrase means more than this. To **serve with a pure conscience** connotes three things: faithfulness, full commitment, and right motives. Throughout his ministry, Paul remained faithful to Christ; he never wavered in his relationship nor did he question it. He remained faithful to his calling; Paul never grew weary, never complained, and never quit when things became difficult. He always turned to Christ ([2 Cor 1:3-11](#)). Paul remained faithful to teach the truth. He never preached what people *wanted* to hear; he always faithfully communicated the doctrine God espoused in Scripture. Finally, we see that Paul walked faithfully with the Lord by ordering his life according to the principles and boundaries that God outlined in His Word.

How would you describe your faithfulness to the Lord? How do you express your faithfulness through worship and service in this local body?

Question
4

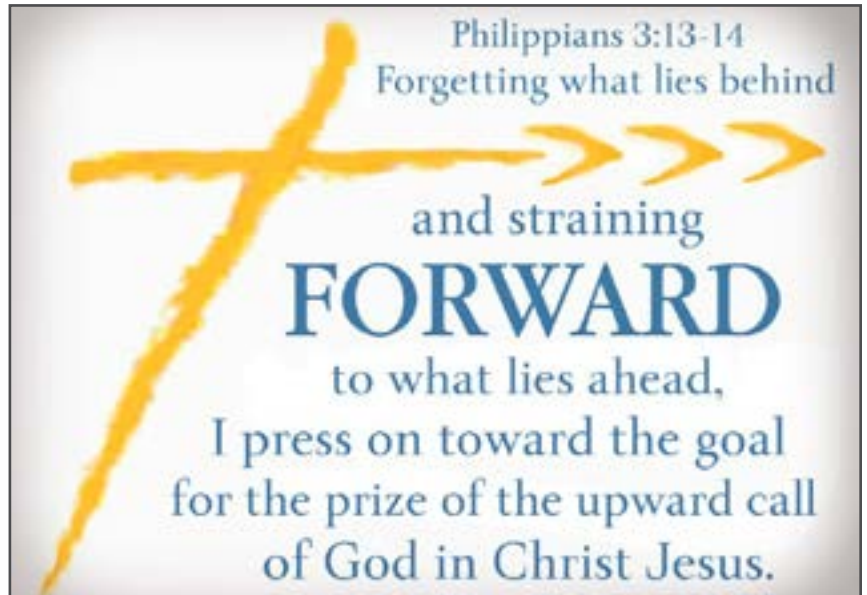
In-Depth Information



When Paul speaks of his **forefathers**, he likely means the people of Israel who faithfully served the Lord rather than his biological ancestors. Therefore, the phrase refers to men like Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, and the prophets. Although these men had faults and made mistakes just as Paul did, they trusted God and served Him faithfully throughout their lives.

Second, Paul served Christ with full commitment; today, we'd say that he "was all in."

He didn't serve the Lord only when he had time; he didn't serve the Lord when he felt like it; he didn't serve when it was convenient. He dedicated his entire life to serve the Lord; he surrendered to the Spirit and allowed Him to lead. Paul endured hardships, faced opposition, and experienced tremendous persecution. Yet, none of this stopped Him from praising and serving the Lord. We live in a society that values excitement



over commitment and fleeting experiences over loyalty. When the excitement of an experience fades, people seek the newest and best experience society has to offer. People often seize the opportunity, but rarely complete an entire project. As believers, we must remain focused, fulfill our obligations, and finish the task to which we have been called.

How do you express your full commitment to the Lord?

Question # 5

Finally, Paul maintained the right motives throughout his ministry. He never sought attention for himself, he never profited at the expense of others, and he never displayed a haughty, know-it-all attitude. He consistently relied on the power of Christ to direct him and supply all his needs. He always pointed others into a relationship with Christ and gave Him all the glory for the things He accomplished through him. This contrasts vividly with the mindset of the world. Several weeks ago on Tuesday outreach, we encountered a couple outside of their home and struck up a conversation to invite them to church. Appearing a bit sarcastic, if not inebriated, the man asked us to pray for him. I asked how specifically. To which he said, "Health, wealth, and fame—you know my fifteen minutes on YouTube." This typifies the response of the world; their motivation is selfish and self-centered. As believers, however, our motivation ought to be to please the Lord and glorify Him as we faithfully serve Him.

Paul continues his prayer by revealing that he constantly remembers Timothy **night and day**. As he prays, Paul is **mindful** of Timothy's **tears**, but he also **greatly** desires

Instruct

to see him and **that he may be filled with joy** (v. 4). We shouldn't speculate on what caused Timothy to cry, but it does remind us that we ought to pray for each other intimately. Whether they're **tears** of joy, **tears** of mourning, **tears** of frustration, or **tears** of hardship, we must pray for one another daily! We should pray that we have a positive influence on others, so that they might continue to grow in their faith and seek to do the will of the Lord regardless of the circumstances. We should pray that they find their joy and strength in the Lord, so that they don't become distracted or discouraged.

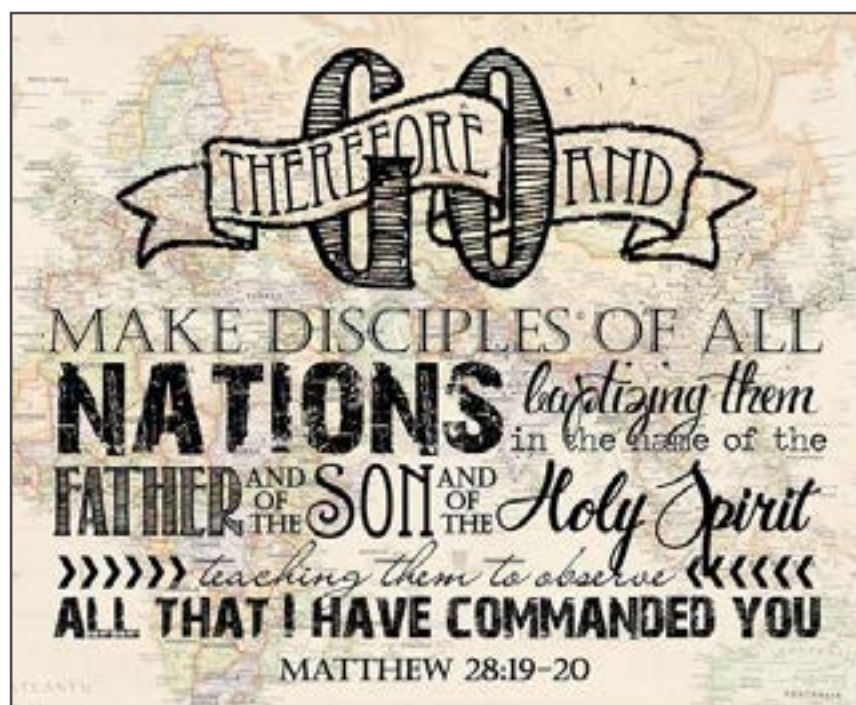
In what other ways should we pray for our family in Christ?

Question
6

2 Timothy 1:5

THE GENUINENESS OF OUR FAITH CULTIVATED:

Part of Paul's **joy** and thanksgiving in this prayer is based upon his recollection of Timothy's **genuine faith which first dwelt in his grandmother Lois** and his **mother Eunice** (v. 5). Based upon his intimate relationship with Timothy as his mentor, Paul is **persuaded** that this same type of **faith** also dwells in his young protégé because he can see it in his transformed actions and attitudes. Timothy didn't automatically inherit the **faith** of his **grandmother** and **mother** as if they passed it down through their



genes, however. On the contrary, they taught Timothy Scripture and set a good example as role models who served and worshiped the Lord faithfully. In this way, we can see the importance of faithful mentors in our lives who point us to Christ. Just as Timothy had learned and seen in his **grandmother** and **mother**, he now put his **faith** into practice as he became a role model for others to follow; he traveled throughout

the Roman empire fulfilling the Great Commission by making disciples of all nations

just as Christ had commanded and he had been so faithfully taught.

As believers, we are called to help others on their journeys by cultivating their **faith** toward maturity by pointing them to Christ. Entire books have been written on mentorship (or discipleship), but we don't have time to develop the topics fully here in this one lesson. Therefore, we can only briefly discuss five principles that will help us to mentor others successfully. First, mentoring others through Scripture must be a priority in ministry, so they can grow in the Lord. It takes years of concerted effort to teach children to become adults—and even as adults they still make mistakes and fail! As believers, therefore, we must intentionally seek opportunities to mentor them in the ways of the Lord that they should practice by helping them understand and apply Scripture ([Prov 22:6](#)). We don't only need to lecture them, but we need to encourage them by guiding them to make godly choices and serve in their areas of giftedness faithfully and wisely, as found in Scripture.

Why is citing lack of time for mentorships not a viable excuse? What is the danger in not mentoring others?

Question
7

Second, as mentors we must be willing to teach, but we must always exercise a humble and teachable spirit ourselves. We don't know it all; we've also made many mistakes ourselves. We, therefore, must instruct with grace and patience, seizing teachable moments to have conversations which point them to God's Word and offer a practical solution to their problem or course correction for their error. At the same time, we must allow God to continue teaching us, so that we best know how to instruct others according to His principles! Third, we must take time to listen and evaluate the situation before we rush to propose a solution or even issue a statement of judgment. Often, we tend to correct a problem quickly without hearing all the facts; this usually makes the problem worse. We need to hear the rationale behind their decision and look at the circumstances that led to it. This can help us more effectively evaluate the outcome. In turn, we can then discuss the results of the decision and help the person see what worked and what went awry.

Why must we have a teachable spirit in order to mentor others?

Question
8

Fourth, we can share what God has taught us through the personal experiences He's allowed us to have; however, our personal experiences must match Scripture. Scripture

dictates and guides our personal experiences—not the other way around! In fact, God does this in Scripture when He records the triumphs and failures of our fellow



humans—even pillars of the faith—for all to see. We can learn, therefore, from Peter’s impetuosity, Thomas’ doubt, David’s indiscretions, and Isaiah’s recognition of his unholiness in relation to his culture. As a result, we can share with others what we’ve learned through our mistakes, our struggles, our trials, and our successes by telling what God has revealed to us, how He has taught us, and how at times He has corrected us. When sharing our experiences, it helps others to understand

better the biblical principles that God espouses in His Word because they will see them visibly practiced.

Finally, we must take others on the journey with us and give them opportunities to practice what they have learned. To give them responsibility requires trust not only in them, but ultimately in God because He is the One working through them. Imagine a father teaching his son to ride a bike. At some point, the father must let go of the bike and let his son follow the instructions that he has given. Perhaps, the bike might teeter and wobble and crash, but the father stands ready to pick up the pieces and continue the lesson. If the father always runs alongside the bike and holds onto it, the son will never learn to ride; he will always depend upon his father. As mentors, we need to let go at some point. We should still stand ready to help others problem solve, but we need to allow them to gain valuable experience, so that they can continue the work and ministry that God has given them.

Why is it important to teach someone to function independently in ministry by trusting the Lord rather than relying upon you as the mentor?

Question
9

2 Timothy 1:6-7

THE GIFT OF COURAGE:

As we saw in the previous section, mentors should encourage others. Paul does just that with Timothy here in verse 6. He reminds him **to stir up the gift of God which is in him**. The phrase **stir up** literally means to fan the flame; Timothy's fire for ministry isn't in danger of going out in this context, but Paul encourages him to keep going by stoking his fire continually. Like Paul, we also ought to encourage others to use their spiritual gifts to serve the Lord faithfully. Certainly, we must guard against burn out, but more importantly we must focus on serving the Lord consistently and fervently. This doesn't mean that we engage in ministry without control like a roaring forest fire. On the contrary, we must make reasonable and sound decisions based upon the Lord's leading through His Word. We must exercise prudence and discretion, but this doesn't mean that we have no passion and our fire has died. It simply means we must wait upon the Lord for His wisdom and act under His leadership. Consequently, we shouldn't encourage others to sit idly nor should we encourage them to act impetuously without wisdom on the spur of the moment without evaluating and planning for the situation (like Peter the disciple often did).

Why must we use our spiritual gifts with prudence and discretion?

Question
10

In-Depth Information



The phrase **through the laying on of my** (Paul's) **hands** doesn't mean that Paul imparted or gave the spiritual **gift**. God is clearly the Giver in this case. It means that Paul confirmed or testified to the presence of this God-given **gift** in Timothy's life. Thus, **laying on of hands** is a sign of affirmation of one's calling by the people who know him best.

Finally, Paul declares that Timothy can use this **gift** boldly because **God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind** (v. 7). Through Scripture and the example of Christ, God has equipped us with commonsense and reason. Therefore, when Paul tells Timothy that "**God has not given us a spirit of fear,**" we can't stop reading there; we must read the entire context: "**but of power and of love and of a sound mind.**" Neither in ministry nor in life in general does the lack of fear give us the opportunity to act recklessly without abandon! On the contrary, we

must use the wisdom and knowledge that God has given us to act in accordance with His expectations, His boundaries, and His will for our lives. We shouldn't **fear** because it shows lack of trust in the Lord, but at the same time we can't act irresponsibly as if we don't **fear** (i.e. respect) the Lord and wait upon Him for guidance. In Christ, we should have boldness to proclaim the gospel without **fear** and follow Him fearlessly to accomplish His will, but we must always remind ourselves to act prudently and wisely under His leadership.

Several years ago, retailers sold a clothing line that promoted the concept of having "No Fear." It became commonplace to see individuals wearing shirts, caps, and other items of clothing that only the phrase "No Fear" stitched onto them. Generally, the phrase



came to signify a movement where people would throw caution to the wind and disregard the consequences of their actions in order to experiment and try something new. Therefore, it promoted the idea that one must not live life in **fear**, but have the courage to seize the moment and make the most of every opportunity regardless of how

irrational or unsafe it may be. When people would utter the phrase "No Fear," they would ultimately place trust in themselves and resign the results of their actions to fate if they failed. They would then pick up the pieces and try again—either until they found a way to succeed or moved on to some other novel innovation.

We shouldn't act recklessly without wisdom as in this "No Fear" campaign, but rather we should implicitly trust in the Lord and allow Him to lead without fearing our circumstances. In ministry, an element of **fear** of the unknown can always exist and dominate our lives, keeping us from doing God's will if we let it. In younger believers, this **fear** sometimes becomes magnified because they are attempting something new with which they don't have much experience; they may feel ill-equipped or ill-prepared. Conversely, some younger believers do act with boldness because they haven't experienced some of the opposition that more mature believers may have

faced. Likewise, **fear** can also occur in more seasoned believers too because they have become timid based upon their life's experiences. Regardless of our situation, we cannot let **fear** reign in our lives; we must trust in the Lord and have courage to do His will and live for Him in a world that has rejected Him along with goodness and righteousness. Therefore, let us seek **power** from the Lord to live fearlessly for Him in every situation, so that He may be honored and people may be pointed to Him as their Savior.

What are some things that people fear in serving the Lord? How should we overcome these fears in Him?

Question
11

As believers, we have a family business that we must perpetuate. Our family business centers on imitating our Savior, instructing future followers, inspiring others to worship and serve corporately, and incorporating others into the kingdom by sharing the gospel and seeing them come to faith in Christ. To perpetuate this ministry, it requires that we teach and train younger family members to follow in the footsteps of Christ and prepare them to live their transformed lives boldly before others. Christ took twelve disciples and poured into them over three years during His earthy ministry. He mentored them and sent them out to do ministry, but He never abandoned them! He sent His Spirit to remind them of the things He had taught and to guide them ([John 14:26](#)). God has given us everything we need; He has sent others to equip the church for ministry, so that we can serve Him faithfully in a fallen world ([Eph 4:11-12](#)).

In this first chapter of 2 Timothy, we've seen how many people impacted his life and left a lasting legacy of faith that influenced how he lived and served the Lord. The primary influence came from his grandmother and mother who taught him the Word of the Lord and pointed him to a relationship with Christ. Paul, as his spiritual father, continued that role as a mentor by guiding him in hands-on ministry, encouraging him to remain faithful, and equipping him to lead the mission of the church. God places someone like Timothy in our lives today; we need to take the opportunity to mentor and encourage others around us to participate in ministry and fulfill the calling which God has placed on their lives. Don't let the busyness of life prevent us from taking time to invest in others, but let us be intentional and seek to mentor others in Scripture. Let us continue to reproduce disciples in the way that Christ has shown us. May we ask ourselves this week: Who is my Timothy that I should mentor in this community here at FBCFW?

Incorporate

As a community, how should we guard our consciences like Paul so that we can have a more impactful ministry in Christ?

As a community, why is mentoring / discipling others so important? How can we do a better job of mentoring young (and even mature) believers?

Why should we not be ashamed of the gospel? What does this look like to the secular world around us?

October 13, 2019



Remain Faithful to the Truth

2 Timothy 1:8-18

Focal Verse:

"Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus."

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2 Timothy 1:13

Introduce

Pat had engaged in her hobby of buying model dollhouses and putting them together to feature in her collection for years. At present, she had a huge collection of all sizes and shapes of dollhouses that filled her formal living room in the back of her house. After purchasing her most recent project, she opened the package and began to pull out the pieces. To this point in her hobby, every model for a dollhouse had come with detailed blueprints and instructions, labeling every piece and showing how they fit together to create a beautiful masterpiece—and this dollhouse was no exception. Although the pieces looked very similar, Pat decided that she could do this on her own, so she laid the blueprints and instructions aside and never once even glanced at them. She spread the pieces all over the floor to give her room to work and then put the ones which looked similar in the order that she thought they should go.

One by one, Pat began to assemble the pieces. Rather than dry-fitting them first, she was so confident that she had put them together correctly that she glued them immediately. Meanwhile, the blueprints that contained the actual pattern by which she ought to gauge her progress laid on the end table out of view. Having a plan of her own, she attempted to build each story of the dollhouse separately and then connect them all at once. She figured that this would expedite the process and make sure that each piece was properly attached in the



three-story model. Somehow all the pieces seemed to have fit that she placed thus far, but when she began to attach each story she noticed that they didn't align correctly. She tried to use a bit of force to merge them together, but nothing worked! She grabbed the blueprints and began looking at the pattern they had given, showing the proper construction of the model. She realized that several pieces looked the same, but they were in the wrong places. So, she tried to separate them and re-attach them in the proper places; however, the quick-setting glue had already dried. The flimsy balsa wood began to snap and break under the pressure; there was no way to fix the

Introduce

model. Pat hadn't remained faithful to the pattern in the blueprints and she ventured on her own, creating a huge disaster which she couldn't fix.

God has given us a set of blueprints by which to order our lives. Many people, however, try to venture on their own like Pat and experience disastrous consequences. Through His Word, God has outlined the best way that we ought to conduct ourselves. Therefore, Paul reminds Timothy to "hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 1:13). As a community, we must remain faithful to the calling by which Christ has called us; we must be faithful in the proclamation of the gospel, the pattern of our lives, and participation in ministry.

Key
Question

In relation to Christ, how faithfully do you uphold His pattern / example?

2 Timothy 1:8-12

BE FAITHFUL IN OUR PROCLAMATION:

Continuing his encouragement of Timothy which we began to study last week in verse 7 where Paul reminded him that “God has not given us a spirit of fear,” he now asserts that he should **not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord nor** of the circumstances of Paul’s imprisonment (v. 8). **The testimony** about **the Lord** simply refers to the content of the gospel message which Paul will clearly describe in the next few verses. When writing to the Romans whom he had not yet visited in person, Paul states the same thing about his own personal ministry to which the Lord had called him: “For I am not **ashamed** of the gospel for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes” (Rom 1:16).

Paul’s declaration doesn’t mean that Timothy had in some way become **ashamed** of the gospel, but rather he encourages him to remain faithful and bold in his proclamation. The secular world mocks the gospel which they do not truly understand. Some regard it as foolishness to believe in a crucified Savior who was raised from the dead (see [1 Cor 1:18](#)). Others mock believers as weak and feeble-minded because we trust in someone whom we cannot physically see and touch. Even today, modern television hosts poke fun at Christians for psychotic episodes of “hearing voices” when referring to the Lord speaking through prayer. With all this animosity and peer pressure, one could easily become overwhelmed and **ashamed**; thus, it could cause them to stop testifying to the goodness and greatness of Christ and retreat from sharing the truth with culture!

For what reasons do some “believers” become ashamed of the gospel? How can we encourage them not to be ashamed, but to proclaim the gospel boldly?

Question
1

In addition, Paul encourages Timothy **not to be ashamed** of him as the Lord’s **prisoner**. As he had several times previously, Paul found himself in jail for the preaching of the gospel. In this case, being imprisoned wasn’t a disgrace because Paul had done nothing wrong; in fact, he had spoken the truth! Paul doesn’t delve into the specific circumstances surrounding his imprisonment, but instead bids Timothy to **share with him in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God**. Paul doesn’t have a sadistic streak where he wants to bring other people into his own misery and



An Example of a First-Century Prison

misfortune per se and see them suffer needlessly, but he does warn us that we will suffer persecution at times for remaining faithful to **the gospel**. Even though we may experience persecution, Paul declares that God will empower us to overcome these **sufferings**! God not only gives us the strength to endure, but He also leads us and carries us through these difficult

times Himself.

In our own day, persecution of believers has continued to increase around the world—and even here in the United States. Death and violence against believers are a stark reality for some in different parts of the world. In the US, we face many different forms of persecution. Some believers may be fired from their jobs for speaking about Christ or even refusing to participate in activities which violate Scripture; they may be passed over for promotions at work; they may be excluded from certain groups or venues; they may be labeled as intolerant and hateful, leading to an accusation of preaching hate. Christians may be bullied for their beliefs, commanded to remain silent, or even risk having their rights violated or stripped away. Despite these risks, we cannot cover in shame; we cannot fear the consequences the world imposes upon those who live righteously. Conversely, we must boldly proclaim **the gospel** and consistently live in holiness regardless of what may happen because in the end we will be victorious in Christ!

How have you experienced persecution in your life? How did Christ help you to overcome it?

Question
2

Over the next four verses, Paul summarizes the content of **the gospel** and describes how it gives us security. He begins by announcing that Christ **has saved us and called us with a holy calling** (v. 9). In this context, **calling** refers to our salvation and not a vocation, ministry, spiritual gift, or area of service. Thus, God has invited, or **called**, us to have eternal life and experience His transformation through Christ; He extends

this invitation to all people and generously saves those who accept! As he does in so many of his other letters, Paul emphasizes that we are **not saved according to our own works**, but **according to God's purpose and grace given to us in Christ Jesus**. Although we do good **works** and live **holy** lives *because* we are **saved**, we cannot perform good **works** in order to receive salvation. No amount of good **works** could ever reconcile us to the Father; only the finished work of Christ on the cross whom He raised three days later from the dead can ever purge our sin and transform our lives!

Moreover, God had this plan or **purpose** in mind **before time began**—that is before He spoke the universe into existence. In [Ephesians 1:4](#) which we studied in January of this year, Paul puts it this way: “Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him.” As we saw in the introduction, God has given



us the exact blueprints that we must follow to have a relationship with Him! In His foreknowledge, God knew mankind would sin; He also knew the cost of redemption would be great! From the beginning, God understood that only the perfect sacrifice of His Son could remove sin and restore broken relationships. God didn't react to sin when it occurred; He had a plan even *before* it occurred. We need to trust in His plan rather than trying to find a solution on our own! Nothing we can do will ever work; what God has planned will *always* work!

How would you explain to someone that we cannot work for or earn our salvation?

Question
3

Paul continues to describe how salvation **has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ** (v. 10). Through the incarnation (i.e. **appearing**), Jesus became flesh and **abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel**. Sin had brought death into the world as part of the original curse that God expressed to Adam: “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Gen 2:17). When

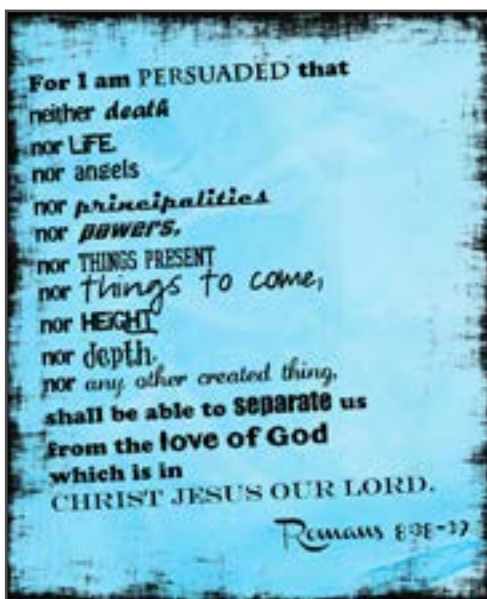
Instruct

Christ came into the world, He died for all mankind; He was buried in a borrowed tomb, but death and the grave could not contain Him for three days later He resurrected triumphantly ([Acts 2:23-24](#)). Dying in our place and being raised on the third day, Christ rendered death impotent for anyone who has a relationship with Him. For this reason, 1 Corinthians 15:26 states it this way: “The last enemy that will be *destroyed* is death.” As believers, we have nothing to fear—not even death itself—because we have something greater that awaits in Christ through **the life and immortality** He bought for us!

For a brief moment, Paul returns to discuss the ministry to which Christ has called him. Christ **appointed** him as **a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles** to take **the gospel** to them (v. 11). Certainly, these three categories (**preacher, apostle, and teacher**) may have some distinction; however, Paul doesn’t really wish to draw any distinctions here. His main point is that Christ **appointed** him to proclaim **the gospel to the Gentiles!** We may all have different spiritual gifts and serve in different positions or areas in the church, but we all have one goal: proclaim **the gospel**. Social ministries and fellowships without **the gospel** only meet needs temporarily. Everything we do must be saturated with the gospel in order to show people the true blueprints for eternal life.

In your area of service in the church and the secular community, how do you concentrate on proclaiming the gospel?

Question
4



As a messenger bearing the good news of **the gospel** to **the Gentiles**, Paul suffered **these things**, in particular his current imprisonment, for the sake of the Lord; however, he is **not ashamed** (v. 12). He sees the bigger picture and the eternal value of his ministry—not only for others who hear and respond, but also for himself. He can have this confidence even though he faces physical peril because he trusts in the Lord. Therefore, he can exclaim, **“I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.”** Paul doesn’t explicitly say **what** he

committed unto the Lord; but based on the context which outlines **the gospel** and demonstrates the eternal security of salvation in Christ, it seems as if he is talking about his very life. He has surrendered his life wholly unto Christ who will guard and preserve him until **the day** of His return when He will grant Paul eternal life. Nothing in this world, not even death, can separate him from God’s gracious gift in Christ ([Rom 8:38-39](#)).

Like He did with Paul, God has called us to proclaim **the gospel** faithfully; however, the enemy frequently attempts to put obstacles in our way. Some obstacles may be mental in which we doubt the ability that God has given us, question our knowledge of Scripture, and fear the unknown—whether being asked a question we can’t answer or not knowing how the other person may respond. Other roadblocks may be physical or spatial. We may wrongly perceive ourselves as too busy and too much in a hurry to share or that we never have the opportunity. We may fear the consequences of speaking out publicly. Whatever fears or shortcomings we may have, we cannot allow them to dictate our obedience. In fact, God works despite and through our shortcomings, so that people will know assuredly, “This is of God; He did this!” Therefore, let us make ourselves available for the Lord to use and let us fearlessly take the good news of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth!

What prevents you from sharing the gospel more than you do? How will Christ help you overcome these obstacles?

Question
5

2 Timothy 1:13-14

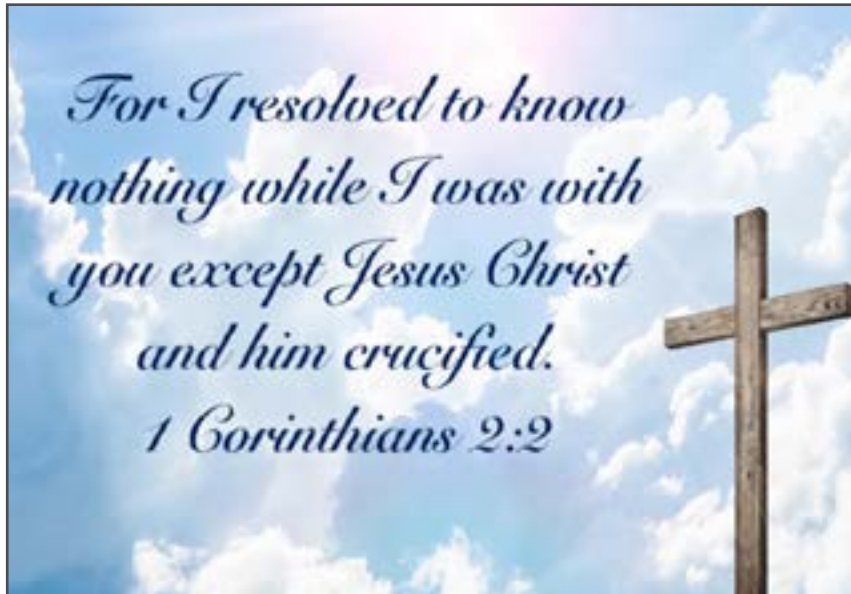
BE FAITHFUL IN OUR PATTERN:

After reminding Timothy of the content of the gospel, Paul implores him to **hold fast the pattern of sound words which** he had **heard from** him and focus on **Christ** (v. 13). Timothy is to teach the truth about Christ **in faith and love**. In other words, he should teach **sound** doctrine and guard against any error by remaining faithful to Scripture; similarly, he should also speak the truth **in love**. He shouldn’t cater to what society desires to hear, but he should focus on proclaiming the truth which comes directly from the Lord! Paul also explains that **the Holy Spirit who dwells in us** will help him to remain faithful to **the good thing which was committed to** him (v. 14). The **good thing** refers to the gospel. Therefore, **the Holy Spirit** helps us to recall God’s Word and apply it correctly; He safeguards the correct interpretation of Scripture when we read it

Instruct

in context ([2 Peter 1:19-20](#)).

Paul wants Timothy to understand that he must stick to God's blueprints; he cannot alter the gospel in any way! The gospel isn't like a home renovation where one can add or change things in the middle of the project. An altered gospel is not really the



gospel at all ([Gal 1:6-9](#))! Moreover, Timothy must focus on the main tenets of the gospel and not get sidetracked. He should focus on Christ alone—crucified and resurrected. In 1 Corinthians 1:17, for example, Paul warns, "For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no

effect." Although baptism functions as an important symbol of change and a step in obedience unto the Lord, the message of the gospel should remain at the forefront! It's not baptism that saves, but Christ! Therefore, we must always remember to have the right perspective when proclaiming the gospel.

What are some things or issues that distract from the basic truths of the gospel?

Question
6

In 2011 upon returning home from a mission trip in East Africa, I stopped to visit a friend stationed with the US Army in Bamberg, Germany. While on base, he befriended two men who attended a church in Würzburg consisting primarily of West Africans. While I was there, they invited my friend to attend their ordination service. Knowing something about African culture in general, I asked my friend if they would ask me to speak as a guest; to which he replied that he didn't think so. But they did! Having observed a little of the church and worship service, it seemed to all revolve around "the prophet" who started the church and had come to ordain these men. So, the Spirit laid it on my heart to speak from [1 Corinthians 2:2](#) about how we should focus on Christ and not human personalities. As ordained ministers, I reminded them that we should make ourselves less and elevate the name, person, and work of Christ.

When the self-proclaimed “prophet” came to speak, the service entirely centered on him. At one point, he even said the tithes and offerings belonged to him. To which I dissented when he asked if we agreed. So, he began to talk about people sowing division and discord in *his* church. He even pronounced a curse upon me and said that I would drop dead before leaving Germany, just as happened to someone he cursed in England. Yet, God had given me those words to speak in love to this arrogant and errant man. The gospel is not about *us*; it surely involves us because we must repent and accept it as God has graciously given us the opportunity. The gospel should focus on Christ! It proclaims who He is, what He came to do, and how we can have a relationship through Him. Let’s not distort the gospel or make it more difficult than it is. Let us communicate it faithfully and focus on the main point: Christ!

Why is it important to focus on Christ rather than ourselves when we talk about the gospel?

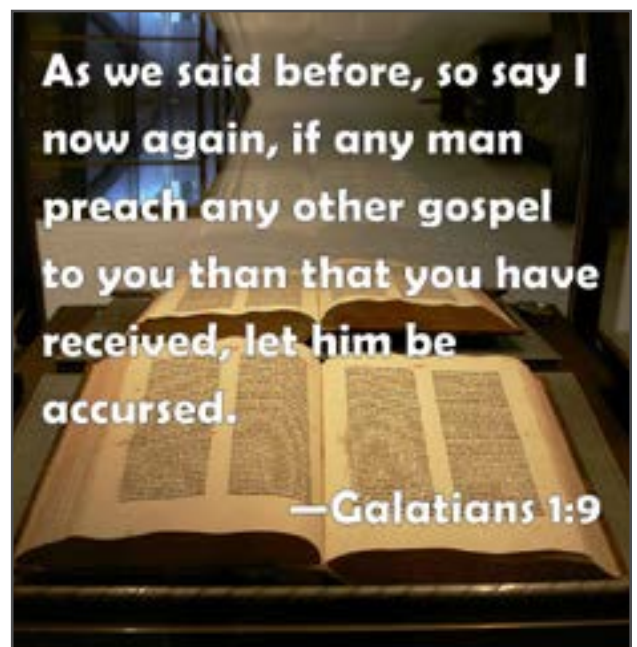
Question
7

2 Timothy 1:15-18

BE FAITHFUL IN OUR PARTICIPATION:

Finally, Paul encourages Timothy to remain faithful to participate in the gospel because some **have turned away** (v. 15). A large group (literally **all**) in **Asia** Minor, probably centered around the city of Ephesus, abandoned both Paul and the gospel. The Greek word translated **turned away from** means deserted or rejected. In other words, they rejected both Paul and the truth of the gospel. Paul names two individuals in particular, **Phygellus and Hermogenes**, who probably served as the two leaders of this heretical group. Outside of this verse, we know nothing about them or their beliefs or even why they **turned away from** Paul. We simply know that they likely rejected the truth of the gospel which was the basis for Paul’s ministry.

To participate faithfully in the gospel, we must accept God’s plan for us in Christ, surrender our lives completely to Him, and live according to His holy nature. The **household of Onesiphorus** stands in stark contrast to the two troublemakers Paul



Instruct

mentioned in the previous verse. Rather than rejecting Paul, **Onesiphorus often refreshed** him and **was not ashamed** of his chains (i.e. imprisonment). On the contrary, rather than abandoning Paul, he **zealously** looked for him all over **Rome** and eventually **found** him. Whether this was when Paul was under house arrest in **Rome** ([Acts 28:17-31](#)) or another time, **Onesiphorus** came to care for him and make sure his needs were met. Therefore, Paul asks the Lord to **grant mercy** upon **Onesiphorus in that Day** (i.e. Jesus' second coming) because even Timothy knows **very well how many ways that he had ministered to him while in Ephesus** (v. 18).

How does Scripture call us to minister to one another while faithfully adhering to the principles of the gospel?

Question
8

When we truly accept the gospel, it transforms our lives in both tangible and intangible ways. This transformation causes us to have compassion for others and act to meet their needs. Moreover, God allows us to notice areas in which we can



minister to others. This may mean encouraging others to remain strong in their faith in the Lord or alleviating obstacles, so that they can more effectively concentrate on sharing the gospel and the primary ministry to which Christ has called them. We're all in this struggle together; we need each other under the leadership of the Spirit, so that we can make the

right decisions, remain faithful to the right doctrine, and remember the main point of our declaration—the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Based on this passage, we can identify three areas in which we can participate in the gospel. First, we should serve humbly by meeting the needs of others. We don't exist in isolation. God didn't create us to navigate life on our own; He placed us in a community to help one another. We shouldn't abandon others during a time of need or even overlook the needs of others by focusing on our own. We must exercise

compassion and meet their needs as God leads. Second, we must share the gospel in unity; we must have the same goal. We must stand on the absolute truth of the gospel and agree that Christ is the only way that we can have eternal life! Third, we must study Scripture in order to identify errant teaching and take steps to correct it. God has given us the Holy Spirit to protect us from following error. As a church, we must remain faithful to the blueprints found in God's Word despite what culture may say and popular interpretation may espouse. Therefore, let us faithfully participate in the gospel of the Lord by actively serving Him!

What other ways can we as a community participate in the gospel?

Question
9

In the introduction, we saw what happened when Pat ignored the blueprints that came with the dollhouse and ventured on her own. The pieces became jumbled and misapplied, leaving the house dysfunctional and in disarray. Unfortunately, man destroys everything he touches apart from the plan and purpose of the Lord. Man thinks he knows best, but in the end he knows nothing without wisdom from the Lord. Before He created the world, God already knew this about man, so He designed a plan and communicated it clearly through His chosen messengers. The plan is perfect and life-changing if only we would follow it!

We must stick to God's plan without deviation. If we deviate, it only leads to death! God has given us a roadmap to eternal life, but it only has *one* way. Other avenues will not work; all roads do not lead to heaven. We can only have life when we accept God's gracious gift through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross by repenting from our sins and turning to Him. If you've accepted this gift already and you know you have eternal life in Christ, remain faithful to the truth and proclaim the message of the gospel boldly. Don't be ashamed; don't let culture win. If you've not accepted it, today is the day of salvation. Don't wait! We don't know what tomorrow may hold. Don't miss out on this free gift of salvation in Christ Jesus.

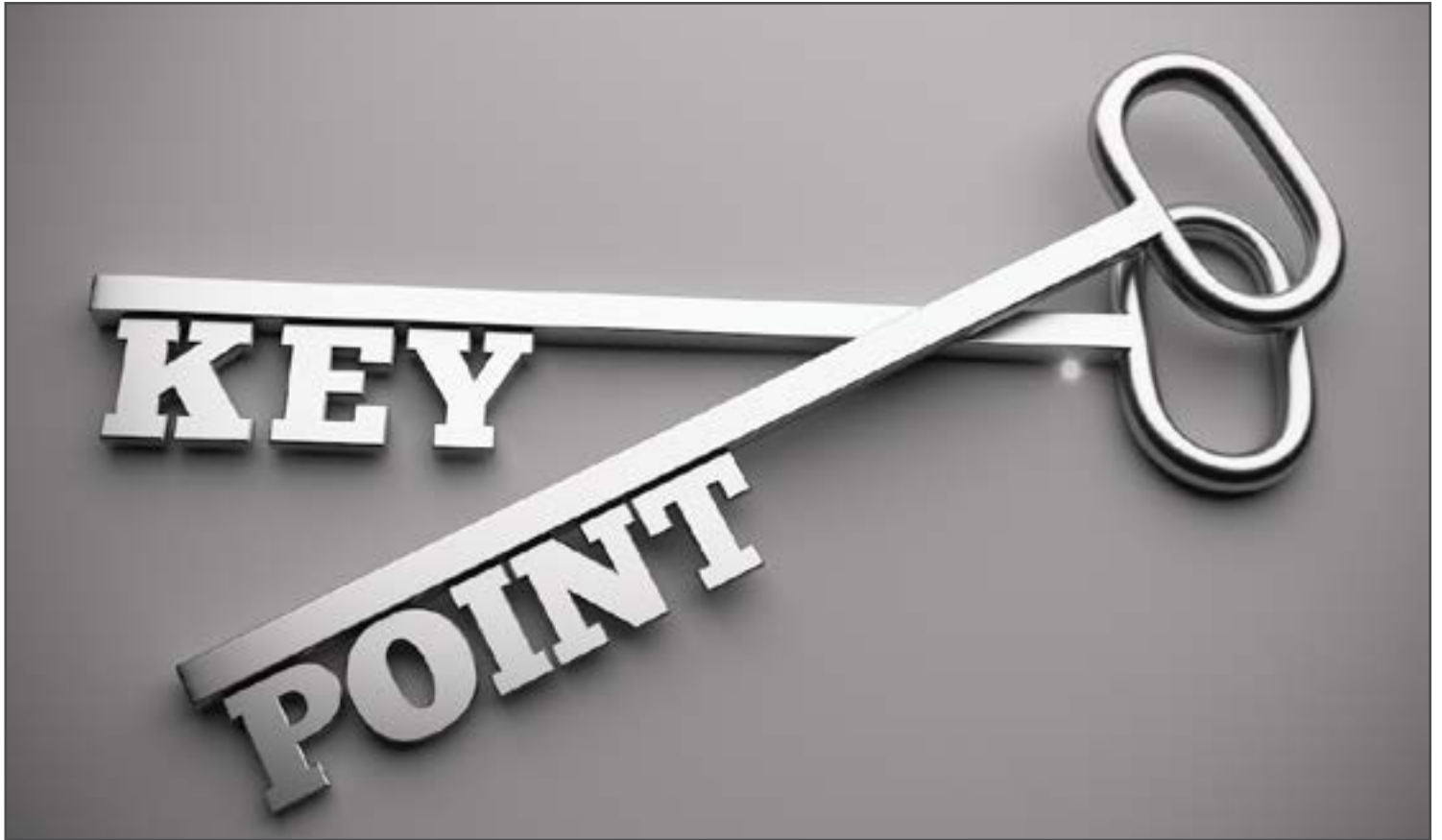
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As a community, how can we encourage one another to be bolder in our proclamation of the gospel? Why should we not worry about what others may think or do?

What are the basic principles of the gospel upon which we must all agree without exception?

In what ways has God called us as a community to live out or participate in the gospel?

October 20, 2019



*Remember the
Main Point
2 Timothy 2:1-10*

Focal Verse:

"Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel."

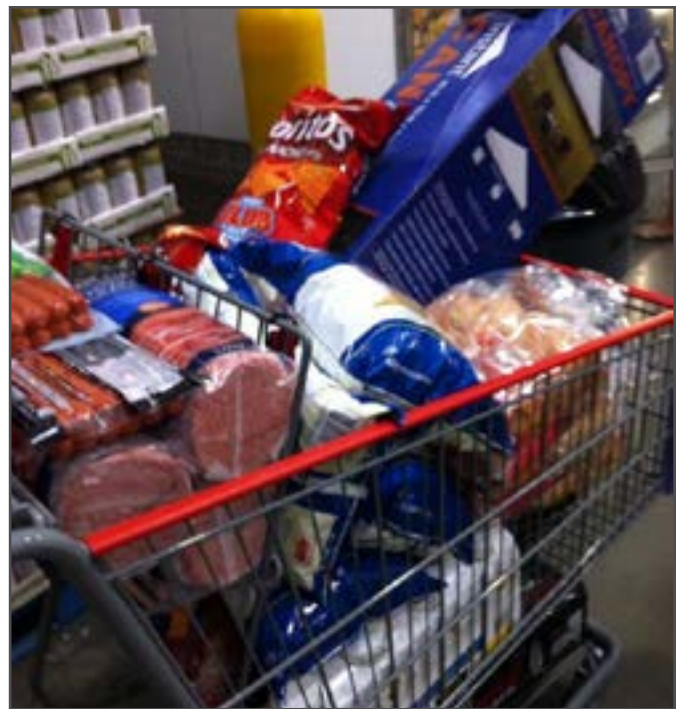
2 Timothy 2:8

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Introduce

Every year, Jonathan D. Stracted invited a group of friends over to his home for a time of fellowship in which they barbecued and watched their alma mater's football game in the afternoon. Jonathan began preparations for this big event months in advance because he wanted everything to go smoothly. On the week of the gathering, he went to the grocery store to purchase everything he needed for the barbecue. He'd hosted the party so many times that he felt he didn't need a list; he was confident that he could remember it all. As he entered the store, Jonathan saw a huge display promoting many items for a tailgate party that he would need—and, even better in his mind, all the items had the team's logo on them.

He made a beeline for this display and started flinging things into his cart one after the other: potato chips, hamburger buns, and sodas. Then, he meticulously started going down one aisle at a time. He loaded his cart with fresh onions, tomatoes, a veggie tray, lettuce, and all the condiments. In the dairy section, he found several good kinds of cheese and dip for the chips. On the way to the register, a package of bratwursts caught his eye, so he tossed them into the cart for those who didn't like hamburger. Using the self-checkout, he scanned his rewards card



and then carefully scanned each item, paying at the end with a credit card.

After leaving the store, he went straight home to begin preparations for the party; he put the groceries away and began to set up his house for his guests. He got the shade tent out of the garage, set up tables and chairs, and re-positioned his large television outside so they could watch the game. Having pulled out the grill, he checked the level of the propane and then commenced cleaning it before his friends arrived. Soon, the doorbell rang and a steady progression of friends began to fill his house and yard. He flipped on the television and selected the channel for the pre-game. Everything was ready! As Jonathan D. Stracted's friends began gathering all the necessary things for the barbecue, one of them called out, "Where are the hamburger patties?" Without thinking, Jonathan blurted out, "They're in the refrigerator along with everything else; I

Introduce

just picked them up at the store.”

Jonathan’s friend searched the refrigerator high and low and exclaimed, “They’re not here, man.” Puzzled, Jonathan stopped what he was doing and went to investigate. Suddenly, a startled look came over his face. He had forgotten the hamburger meat; he had bought everything else, but he had forgotten the main thing. He was both panicked and horrified. “How could something like this happen,” he thought? Unfortunately, Jonathan D. Stracted’s problem happens too frequently among believers. Some believers become distracted and sidetracked, forgetting the main point. In [2 Timothy 2:1-10](#), Paul writes Timothy to remind him to focus on the main point. He urges Timothy to remember to mentor others as well as to remember the motivation, the mission, and, most importantly, the message in which he should engage! As a community, we must remember the main point—the gospel—and how it impacts our lives!

Key
Question

What is the main point of Scripture that God wants to communicate clearly to us?

2 Timothy 2:1-2

REMEMBER TO MENTOR:

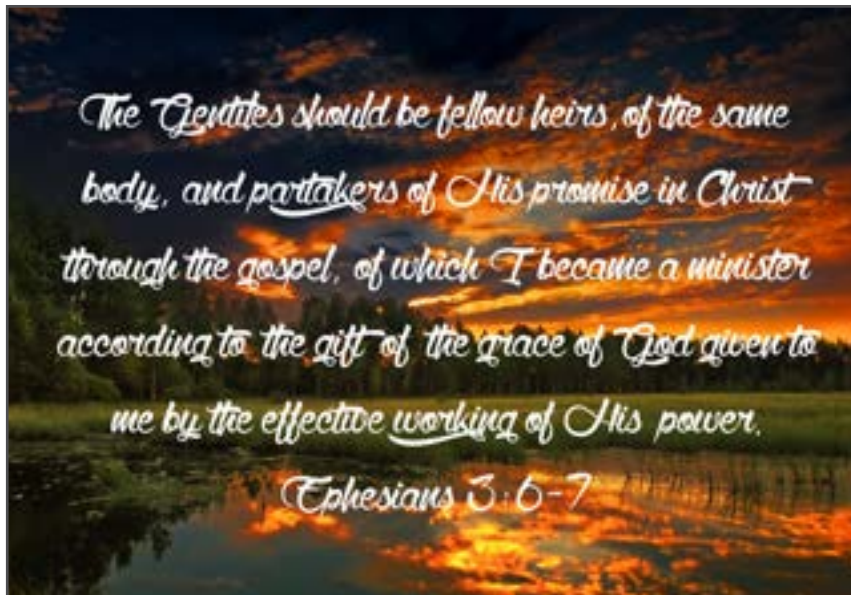
Paul opens this chapter by admonishing Timothy to remain faithful in following the example set by Onesiphorus rather than that of Phygellus and Hermogenes (see [2 Tim 1:15-18](#)). **Therefore**, he encourages Timothy to **be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus** (v. 1). The way that Paul writes **be strong** in the Greek shows that he should continue doing what he's already doing. He should continue to submit to the Lord and fan the flame ("stir up the gift") that God has given him (see [2 Tim 1:6](#)). Timothy has a strong background of faith because he has surrounded himself with faithful people like his grandmother, mother, and Paul. Therefore, he must continue to walk faithfully by the doctrine these people have taught him in Christ and follow the example that they have set for him.

As much as this support system has helped him, however, Timothy's true strength comes from the Lord! Thus, the command to **be strong** is written in such a way as to emphasize the fact that the Lord Himself empowers and strengthens this young man. As a result, whether we are mentoring someone or are being mentored by someone, we must remember the source of our strength comes from the Lord alone; mentors may fail at times, but God never will. This doesn't negate the importance and positive value of good mentors, but it does help us to put mentorship in the proper perspective. Ultimately, our faith is in Christ upon whom we should always rely and not in other human beings. If a mentor does fail or err, we cannot let it shake our faith and disrupt our fellowship with Christ; we must remember the source of our strength comes from Christ and continue to walk faithfully ourselves despite the failure of others around us!

Why must we respect our mentors, but at the same time ultimately know that our strength comes from the Lord?

Question
1

Paul, therefore, reminds Timothy to **be strong in the grace found in Christ Jesus**. God does indeed save us by **grace**, but He also shows us **grace** by calling us to minister on His behalf ([Eph 3:7](#); [1 Tim 1:12-14](#)). In this context, Paul refers to the latter—the **grace** given by God to minister, especially in mentoring others. God will certainly teach us through our individual study during our quiet time or through personal experiences He has allowed us to have, but **in His grace** He has placed people in our paths who can



walk with us in life. Consequently, let us use the human resources in the community which God has made available to us, but let us also contribute to the spiritual growth of the community by working with the Spirit to help all believers mature in their faith as we walk together in Christ. For this reason, Paul tells Timothy to pass down **the things** he has **heard**

from him among many witnesses to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (v. 2).

We don't have to go through life feeling alone and isolated; God has placed us in a community to walk together. We can learn from each other about how God has taught us through Scripture. We never need to feel like no one else understands us or we're going through something unique that no one else has experienced. On the contrary, someone in the community most likely has had a similar experience and God has seen them through these times. As believers, we need to look for people to mentor who may be going through similar experiences that we've had in life, so that we can encourage them and share with them what the Lord has taught us. We need to develop intimate relationships with one another in the community, so that we can walk hand-in-hand through life—both during a period of tribulation as well as victory and triumph. God grants us strength in life and has given us His Spirit to help us navigate our life's choices, but He has also placed us in a community so that we can use the collective wisdom that He has given us to teach future generations to rely upon Him and help them avoid some of the same mistakes that we may have made ourselves.

What are some experiences in which God has taught you something significant from His Word which you can share with others?

Question
2

2 Timothy 2:3-4

REMEMBER THE MOTIVATION:

As he has already done in [2 Timothy 1:8](#), Paul reminds Timothy of the frequent **hardship** that accompanies life as a believer and the need to concentrate on his calling from Christ. In life, we can expect trials, trouble, and tribulation, but, as we saw in the previous section, God has placed us in a community to overcome them together. Paul, therefore, tells him that he **must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ**. The phrase interpreted **endure** is much better translated as “share together” or “suffer together.” We live in an ever-increasingly isolated society that doesn’t have significant and meaningful connections despite all the advancements in technology. We need to re-learn what it means to walk through life together.

Posting something online or commenting on someone’s plight via social media shouldn’t replace meaningful dialogue. It can be a way of initially reaching out to someone, but something more substantial ought to take place. In addition, it shouldn’t replace face-to-face interaction with an impersonal and distant form of communication. “Presence” can never be qualitatively replaced by a series of texts or e-mails. To borrow an old expression, we need to be in the trenches together! This doesn’t mean that we cannot communicate through these avenues, but it does mean that we should find more ways to invest in a personal way. When we become a community which serves and suffers together along life’s journey with Christ, we will see more impact on the secular world because they will see a difference and they will want such a connection themselves which they sorely lack.



How has God called us to share in life’s sufferings together as His community?

Question
2

Next, Paul underscores the motivation for enduring **hardship** by comparing the Christian life to that of a **good soldier** who concentrates on his task in **warfare** and

Instruct

doesn't entangle **himself with the affairs of this life**, so that **he may please** his commanding officer (v. 4). Therefore, our motivation in everything we do should be to **please** the Lord and faithfully fulfill His directives. Several years ago when the United States Army advertised on television, each commercial had a jingle which declared: "Be all that you can be in the US Army." God's motto is: "Be the best which I've made you to be!" For this reason, Paul encourages us to be **a good soldier**, not just a **soldier** who does only his minimal duties; one could even say then the "best" **soldier of Jesus Christ!** We need to give our best and live to **please** the Lord every day in the best way that we can!

When thinking about being **a good soldier** as a follower of Christ, we can observe three principles that we should apply. First, **a good soldier** listens to his commander, so that he may know the battleplan and objective. A **soldier** doesn't have free reign to run helter skelter doing whatever he sees fit; he must have the discipline to follow the plan! Life isn't like a video game where we can ignore the objective and do whatever we want; consequences exist. Second, **a good soldier** doesn't question the commander; he may ask for clarification of the objective, but he doesn't second guess or challenge his authority. Yet, some attempt to do this with the Lord! They say, "I would do it this way" or, even worse, they simply go AWOL and disobey. **A good soldier**, however, will submit to his commander willingly because he knows he has his best interests at heart.

As a good soldier in Christ what is our objective(s)?

Question
4



Third, **a good soldier** focuses on the objective and the outcome rather than their immediate circumstances—a theme to which we will turn in the next section. A **soldier** must have situational awareness and pay attention to his surroundings, but he must concentrate on the objective and not get bogged down and lose sight.

Too often, we become bogged down in our circumstances and we lose sight of the large objective to which we have been called in Christ. For this reason, Paul implores Timothy to engage **in warfare** and not become entangled **with the affairs of this life**. Therefore, let us be the best soldiers in Christ that He has made us to be; let's surrender to Him, understand His objective for us, and be assured of the final outcome in Him when we obediently follow His plan for our lives!

In what affairs of this life have you become entangled at times so that you've lost focus on the overarching objective in Christ?

Question
5

2 Timothy 2:5-7

REMEMBER THE MISSION:

Paul now employs two more illustrations to describe the Christian life: an athlete and a **farmer**. As believers, we must remember our mission to share the gospel and disciple others, training them to continue the ministry of Christ faithfully. He explains that **if anyone competes in athletics, he** must compete **according to the rules** to receive a crown (v. 5). The emphasis here lies not on the crown or reward for the victorious, but rather the manner in which they compete! The same goes for the Christian life; God will bless and reward the faithful who compete **according to the rules**, but the emphasis is more on *how* we compete!

Why should we not focus on the crown or reward, but how we compete?

Question
6

Through this athletic metaphor, we can learn two principles that we ought to practice in order to concentrate on our mission. First, athletes must compete honorably by explicitly following the parameters of the contest, otherwise they will suffer the consequences and be disqualified. Although we won't lose our salvation, we must still live honorably by the boundaries that God has established. He has outlined the specific boundaries by which we ought to live in Scripture. If we ignore them, then we will face the consequences just as if we had cheated in a game.

Second, athletes must be devoted to their training and exercise discipline in all they do. Training involves every facet of their lives; they cannot train well in one area and slack in another. They must put forth effort in every area! Imagine an athlete who mentally prepares for a game; he studies film develops a comprehensive game plan,

Instruct

and even practices the fundamentals of the game. However, he never exercises, does conditioning, or even makes healthy choices when eating. He will be so out of shape that he cannot compete well because deficiency in one area will weaken the others! As believers, we must also practice devotion in every area of our lives; we must surrender control of everything completely to the Lord. We must exercise self-control to live a disciplined life in Christ, so that we can be effective in any area of service to which He calls us.

What does a disciplined Christian life look like?

Question
7

Paul now demonstrates how we ought to strive for excellence by appealing to an example of a hardworking farmer (v. 6). He explains that a hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops. Again, Paul emphasizes the manner in which we should serve rather than the reward of the harvest. We should serve the Lord diligently through hard work. A farmer, as any gardener knows, doesn't just go out and scatter



seed to see what happens and hope for the best. He works hard to make sure the crops produce a good harvest through the growth that God ultimately produces. He must till the ground, remove the rocks and weeds, water it when needed, and protect it from damaging insects. Farming requires one's full attention and devotion as well as long hours.

As believers, we must be intentional about serving the Lord. We shouldn't strive for mediocracy just to get things done, but we should strive for excellence through which we can glorify and honor the Lord!

In ministry, why should we strive for excellence in all we do? If we don't, how does the world perceive it?

Question
8

Paul concludes this section by instructing Timothy to think deeply about (i.e. **consider**)

what he has said, so that **the Lord will give him understanding in all things** (v. 7). God has given us logic and reason by which we can apply the wisdom He has clearly revealed to us in His Word. Too often, we get in a hurry and rush through Scripture as if it were on a to-do list that we must complete right now. We ought to slow down and take time to ponder and meditate upon Scripture. Some people also claim that they don't understand Scripture, but they tend to rush through it and never take time to read it and understand it! Although we may not know everything about God's Word, He will always give us insight to understand it if we take time to **consider** it or think about it. We must remember that it's not quantity that matters, but quality time that gives us insight. Therefore, let us devote ourselves to the Lord and seek **understanding** from Him in everything that we do, so that we remain faithful to the mission to which He has called us.

2 Timothy 2:8-10

REMEMBER THE MESSAGE:

Finally, we ought to remember the truth of the message that God has given us to carry to the world. Therefore, Paul highlights two essential truths of the gospel which give comfort and hope. First, he demonstrates how Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise in the Old Testament to send the Messiah into the world through the lineage or **seed of David** (v. 8). He urges Timothy to **remember** and reflect upon that promise ([Isa 11:1-5](#); [Micah 5:2](#)). No matter what suffering or trouble may come in life, we can be confident of one thing: God will always fulfill His promises without fail. Even in the most-dire situation, we can take comfort in knowing that God remains faithful to His promises! Just as He sent the Messiah into the world to bring salvation to all who believe, so He will deliver us all through times of hardship if we turn to Him. As a result, the message we bring to the world is a message of hope. In addition, we also bring a message of healing to the nations as well—not mere physical healing, but spiritual healing through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, Paul reminds Timothy that **Jesus Christ was indeed raised from**



Instruct

the dead. The way that Paul writes the verb “**was raised**” focuses on the results of the resurrection. Jesus’ resurrection brings life to all who participate in it by accepting the **gospel** and surrendering to Him through repentance. Jesus Himself even declares, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live” (John 11:25). What hope and comfort this declaration brings! The **gospel** brings life that can never be taken from us. People can mock us, torture us, persecute us, and even kill us, but they cannot take our life away when we have a relationship with Christ!

How does the message of the gospel bring hope and comfort to our lives?

Question
9

When we focus on the message of the **gospel**, we can **endure all things** in Christ (v. 10). Paul acknowledges his own personal **trouble** that he suffers for taking the **gospel** to the Gentiles (v. 9). He finds himself in **chains**, treated like a criminal (i.e. **evildoer**) even though he had done nothing wrong. Even though he is imprisoned, Paul can still rejoice because **the Word of God is not chained**. Nothing man can do can stop God’s **Word** from going forth and having results. Lea and Griffin capture Paul’s idea best when they assert, “The boldness of Paul’s statement should not blind us to the fact that the spread of the gospel is, above all, a work of divine power. Success in preaching the gospel does not depend on mere human stubbornness, cleverness, or aggressiveness. God himself is the author of all success in preaching his message, and we who proclaim it must remember that God must drive the message home to the human heart with a spirit of conviction.”* Whatever may happen to us, let us remember to allow God to continue to proclaim the **gospel** through us until He calls us home to spend eternity with Him!

In Reference



Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., 1, 2 Timothy, Titus, New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1992), p. 207.

In conclusion, Paul notes that he can **endure all things for the sake of the elect**, so **that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory** (v. 10). In this context, **elect** simply refers to God’s people collectively. Furthermore, Paul isn’t talking about one’s initial **salvation** where he accepts Christ by repenting of

his sins and surrendering to Him. Rather, he's assuring them of their ultimate **salvation** which they have in Christ and the guarantee in which they will spend eternity with Him either when He calls them home or the day He returns to earth to collect the church. Thus, Paul is giving them hope and reassurance that God will fulfill His promise to them just as He had by sending the Messiah in the first place; God will also guarantee their bodily resurrection when He sends His Son to call the church home on that last day! Like Paul, we need to encourage one another with these same words! Let us remind ourselves of how God has been faithful and remember that He will always fulfill the promise of His Word, so that we can mentor others by maintaining the right perspective, focusing on the right mission, and remembering the right message.

Like Jonathan D. Stracted whom we met in the introduction, we all have the propensity to become easily distracted and forget our main purpose. Regardless of our age, every one of us has had a similar experience to this; we've gone into a room to get something, but when we arrive in the spot we can't remember why we went there in the first place. This happens to some more than others, but the root cause remains the same: we have become distracted. On the way from point A to point B, several thoughts may cross our minds on various subjects; we may even see something that grabs our attention on the way and we feel that we need to stop and take care of it right then lest we forget to do it later. Yet, we have forgotten the original mission which we set out to accomplish in the first place.

Fortunately, Christ didn't become distracted in His mission when He came from heaven to earth over 2000 years ago. He focused on His mission to die as a once-and-for-all sacrifice in our place. Along the way, He did the will of the Father, but He didn't let things distract Him from His primary purpose which He kept at the forefront of His mind. Thankfully, for us, He didn't lose sight of the main goal because we would all still be lost in our sin and without hope. Like Christ, we must focus on the priority God has given us; we need to remember the main point of why He called us! Like both Christ and Paul, we need to mentor younger believers in the faith, but we also need to remind ourselves constantly about our motivation, our mission, and His message. Therefore, let us be a community that remembers why God has called us; let us not forget the mission and ministry that He has given us both individually and corporately. Let us be focused and on task without letting the circumstances of life overwhelm us and distract us.

Incorporate

Who in our community can you mentor? Who can you ask to mentor you? What makes them a good mentor?

What is your motivation for serving? How does it reflect the motivation that Paul describes here in this passage?

How are you involved in the mission Christ has given us here at FBCFW? How would you evaluate yourself as a soldier?

October 27, 2019



*Remind Others
of the Truth*
2 Timothy 2:11-19

Focal Verse:

“Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers.”

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2 Timothy 2:14

Introduce

In early Spring, two men set out on a journey to test their survival and navigational skills in the remote wilderness of Big Bend National Park. These two friends wanted to hike from opposite ends of the park and meet on a little-known, less-traveled trail in the middle. They would take only the same basic gear: a small tent, a knife, provisions, water, a flashlight, and a compass. Only having the



coordinates of the trail marked on a less-than-detailed map, their compass would prove their most-valuable tool because it would give them perfect direction; it would tell them true North. On the appointed day, they went to their respective starting points and prepared to embark on their three-day journey to the place where they agreed to meet.

Before he left, the first man took out his compass from his backpack and tested it to make sure that it pointed due North. Everything worked on it! The needle on the compass swung around to the direction that he knew to be North from the park map at the beginning of the trail. So, he began his trek on this empty trail toward the middle of the park. After the other man arrived at his spot, he didn't bother to check his compass to see if it worked properly. He set out on the trail immediately because he was in a hurry to get his hike underway. His compass wildly swung around and pointed North.

After the three days had passed, the first man arrived at the designated site. He waited there for hours for the second man to arrive, but he never did. Alone, he eventually hiked to the nearest ranger's station in order to request help in locating his missing friend. Within a few hours, the search party finally found the second man wandering on another trail, frustrated and confused. Investigating what happened, the second man felt foolish when he realized that he had his phone attached to a magnet in his pocket. It had affected the needle and it no longer pointed truly due North. Even though both

Introduce

men used the same tools, one worked well and kept him on the right path; the other became misguided because external circumstances obscured the truth and altered the compass.

As believers, Scripture offers us a compass that points due North without any interference; when read and applied properly, it points to the Lord! However, some believers are like the second man who allowed external influences unknowingly to confuse his view and mislead his steps. In [2 Timothy 2:11-19](#), Paul instructs his young protégé, Timothy, to remind people of the truth. Some in Ephesus had become confused with errant doctrine and they needed to have a course correction and be reminded of the truth which comes from the Lord. Like Paul and Timothy, we need to remind others of the truth in God's Word; we need to abide by its standards and allow Him to guide us through the Holy Spirit. We can't afford to have our views corrupted by culture, but we need to follow Scripture implicitly to persevere in the Lord, persist in truth, and preclude (or get rid of) the profane in our lives. Let us, therefore, be a community that reminds others of the truth that God has so clearly given us in His Word.

Key
Question

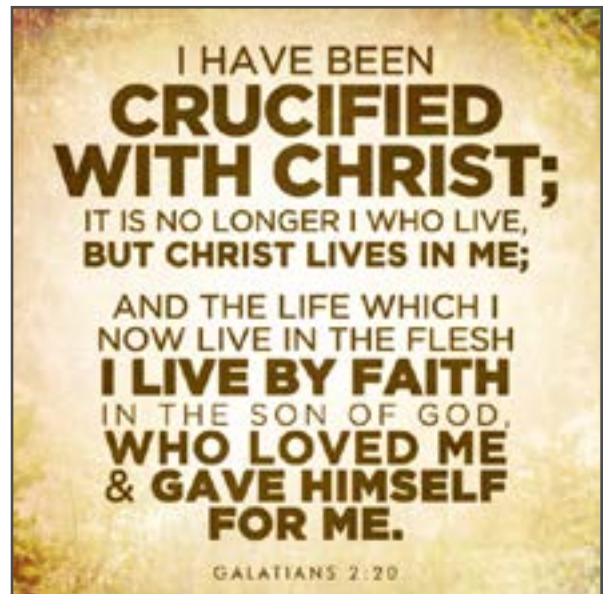
How can we remind others of the truth in love?

2 Timothy 2:11-13

REMIND OTHERS TO PERSEVERE IN THE LORD:

Paul incorporates a **faithful** or true statement to encourage Timothy as well as all believers to persevere in the Lord, especially in the midst of doctrinal error about the resurrection that two men in Ephesus were perpetuating. Each of the three statements in these verses follow the same pattern introduced by the word **if** which outlines how we as believers should or should *not* live in Christ. Paul then shows the result or outcome of living our lives in that particular way. Overall, Paul describes two ways that we ought to live as believers and two ways that we ought *not* live. Beginning with two positive traits that we should exhibit, Paul interjects that **if we died with Him**, then **we shall also live with Him** (v. 11). At face value, this provides hope and reassurance that those of us who have a relationship with Christ will one day share in a literal, bodily resurrection. Christ has guaranteed us eternal life when we surrender to Him, so we can have hope beyond our current circumstances to which we can look forward to victory!

On the other hand, **this faithful saying** recalls Jesus' own teaching in [Luke 9:23-24](#): "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it." To die, in this sense, means that we die to our old, sinful way of life (see also [Rom 6:4-11](#)). We no longer live selfishly whereby we seek honor and glory for ourselves or constantly participate in our own fleshly desires. Having put to death the old man, therefore, we now live to bring honor and glory to the Lord and seek to please Him. When we surrender to Christ, He transforms our desires and conforms us to His image. Therefore, we will seek the will of the Lord and live by His perfect standard as guided by the Holy Spirit.



To what are some things that you have died or that you ought to die to make Christ the priority of your life?

Question
1

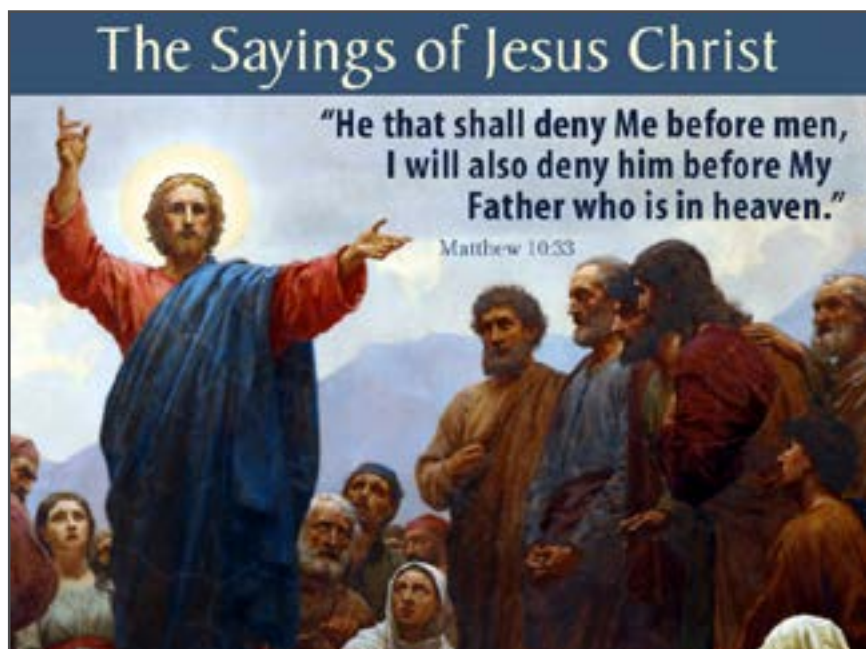
Instruct

Next, Paul explains that **if we endure** or persevere, then **we shall also reign with Him** (v. 12). This perhaps looks forward to the millennial reign of Christ upon the earth in which He will invite believers to participate in reigning with Him (see [Rev 20:1-6](#)). However, Paul may have in mind the share of our inheritance where Christ not only grants us eternal life, but He also makes us joint-heirs with Him (see [Rom 8:17](#); [1 Peter 2:9](#)). In either case, we have a new standard to which we must adhere: Christ. If we have a genuine relationship with Christ, we will persevere in three areas. This doesn't mean that we will be perfect and never stumble, but it does mean that we will grow and mature in our walk with Christ daily, learning from our mistakes. First, we will persevere in right conduct; we will do the right thing and live by Christ's boundaries. Second, we will persevere in faithfulness; we will always make Christ the priority in our lives. Third, we will persevere in right belief. We will trust in what the infallible, inerrant, and inspired Word of God says. We will interpret it correctly based on the context in which God had it written and will abide by its timeless principles (see [v. 15](#)).

When circumstances become difficult in life, how would you encourage someone to persevere in these three areas: right conduct, faithfulness, and right belief?

Question
2

After describing two things we ought to do, Paul describes two things we ought *not* do. First, he says **if we deny Him**, then **He will also deny us**. Like the first **faithful saying**, this one also comes directly from Jesus' teaching in Matthew 10:33: "But



whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven." The way that **deny** is written in the Greek means to keep on denying or **deny** continually. Thus, it excludes what Peter did before the rooster crowed at which point he had denied ever having known Christ three times. Peter didn't continually **deny** Christ, but once he recognized his mistake he

grieved, repented, and Christ ultimately restored him. To **deny** Christ in this context means to reject Him and to continue to reject Him; in other words, people who refuse His generous offer of eternal life will stand in judgment on that last day and He will separate them into eternal destruction and torment because they do not have a relationship with Him.

Finally, Paul commends us not to be **faithless**, but to live consistently in Christ and abide by His will. Therefore, he explains that **if we are faithless**, then **He still remains faithful** because **He cannot deny Himself** (v. 13). Hence, Paul emphasizes the difference between the Lord and mankind; God always **remains faithful** and never changes, but man on the other hand has the tendency to change according to his circumstances. God exercises His faithfulness in three primary ways. First, He **remains faithful** to His promises or covenants; He keeps His Word and always fulfills His obligations, even when we as humans don't fulfill ours. Second, God always stands ready to forgive when we turn to Him; nothing we can do can cause Him to retract His offer of salvation through His Son. The only way we can't participate in the salvation He offers is by consciously rejecting it and refusing to surrender our lives to His Son. Third, He **remains faithful** to correct error and punish wickedness. For those of us who have a relationship with Him, He will convict us and correct us to get us back on the right path; for those who don't have a relationship with Him, He will ultimately sentence them to eternal death and destruction because He **remains faithful** according to His just and righteous character. Therefore, He will punish sin in the end!

In what ways have you experienced God's faithfulness in your life?

Question
3

Overall, Paul encourages us to remain faithful to the Lord as well as to encourage and remind others to persevere in their faith too. We often think of our faithfulness primarily in terms of how we behave or perceive things. Our actions and attitudes should faithfully adhere to what Christ has taught us in Scripture. Yet, we also need to exercise faithfulness in other areas of our lives as well. We need to cultivate our relationship with Christ daily and make Him the priority of our lives. In addition, we need to serve in the church and community faithfully, so that we can mentor others, help the body grow and mature in its faith, and share the gospel with the secular world without hesitation. Moreover, we also should be faithful in our giving; whether of the firstfruits of our tithes, our additional offerings, our time, or our talent, we should

Instruct

faithfully render unto the Lord and return unto Him with what He has so faithfully blessed us.

How would you evaluate your faithfulness to the Lord?

Question
4

2 Timothy 2:14-15

REMIND OTHERS TO PERSIST IN THE TRUTH:

In these next two verses, Paul outlines one specific way in which Timothy must remain faithful: he must persist in practicing and proclaiming the truth of Scripture accurately.



He shouldn't follow popular interpretation or the misguided philosophy of the world; rather, he should remain faithful to speak God's Word in its original context in the way that God intended **the hearers** to understand the message and apply it. Consequently, Paul tells

Timothy to instruct **them**, the believers in Ephesus, solemnly **before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit to the ruin of the hearers** (v. 14). Certainly, this could include both gossip and baseless speculation which can have a damaging effect when people don't substantiate or corroborate charges against someone and simply believe what others say without examining the evidence. Undoubtedly, this can destroy someone's life, but here Paul is referring more to unnecessary and useless arguments which destroy someone's faith and promote doctrinal error.

From this command, we can glean three principles to engage in effective speech that encourages and edifies **the hearers** to remain faithful to Christ and His Word. First, we should *choose* our words wisely. Literally, Paul urges believers "not to argue about words which aren't useful." This doesn't mean that we ignore sin and fail to speak against it or that we remain silent when someone engages in doctrinal error, but it

does mean that we must exercise caution in how we approach the situation and the words we choose to speak. How we say something or the way we say it matters as much as what we say! We don't want to get into an endless verbal battle with someone where we go round and round without resolution ([Prov 26:4-12](#)). We should want the Lord to guide our words, so that we can help the other person grow in maturity and faith. For this reason, we must allow the Holy Spirit to help us pick our battles so to speak. We must defend the key principles of the faith, such as the deity of Christ, His virgin birth, His bodily resurrection, and the fact that salvation comes only through Him; we shouldn't engage in useless philosophical discussions that have no value and don't serve any spiritual purpose of leading someone to Christ or promoting holy and righteous living in their lives.

What are examples of useless debates that we shouldn't enter and have no bearing upon salvation? What are examples of doctrines that we must defend through Scripture?

Question
5

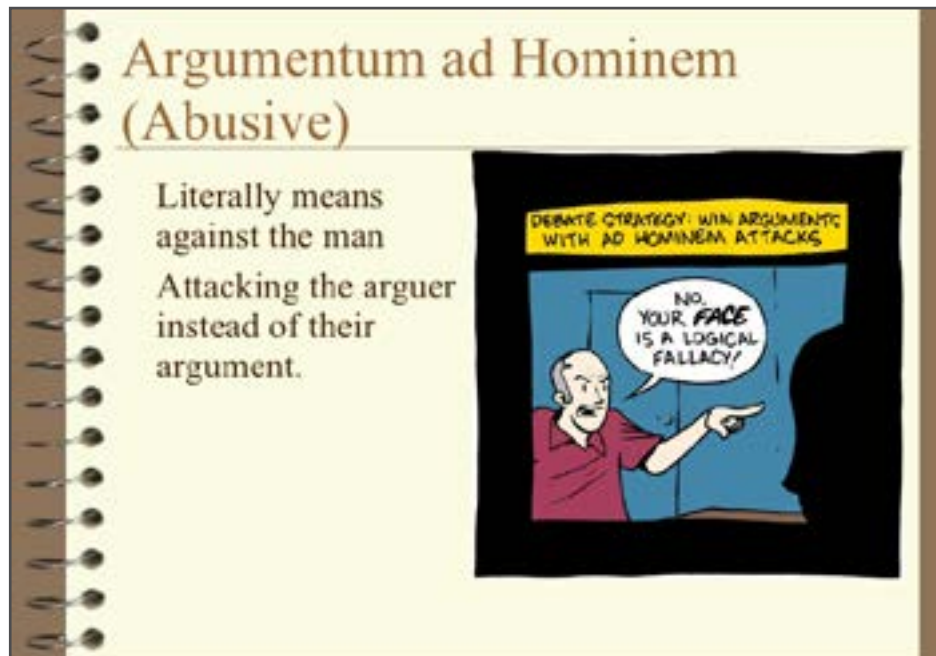
Second, we should *concentrate* on the main idea and not become embroiled in debates that have no value. In last week's lesson titled "Remember the Main Point," we learned that we ought to focus on the message of the gospel: "Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel" (2 Tim 2:8). Too many times, we lose sight of the main message and chase rabbits. As a result, we present a convoluted and hard-to-follow picture which unintentionally distracts from the main point of the message! We often do this by reading into Scripture. For example, the main point of Jesus' ministry to the woman caught in adultery is the fact that He didn't condemn her and instead offered her forgiveness if she would repent ([John 8:1-11](#)); it's not about what Jesus stooped to write in the dust of the ground! Yet, some people focus and speculate on what Jesus wrote and miss the message entirely. Therefore, we must guard against the human tendency to let our minds wander and imaginations roam freely, but rather focus on Christ and His message—lest we become ensnared in the daily routine of life ([2 Tim 2:3-4](#)).

Third, we should *critique* the content of an argument or action and not attack the person. Paul, therefore, implores us not to use words **to the ruin of the hearers**. The Greek word he uses here is from where we get our word "catastrophe." We shouldn't speak in such a way that destroys someone or drives them away, but we must speak in a way so that we can build them up in Christ. In essence, we shouldn't attack

Instruct

someone personally with words that condemn or hurt, but we should critique the content of their argument or action. Frequently, and especially online, people attack the person rather than bring them to a point which helps them understand the error in their thinking. They call them names, insult their intelligence, or even demean their character. This should never be!

We can and should point out the flaws in a person's argument or lifestyle choices that



clearly stand in opposition to Scripture, but we must do so privately at first and always in a loving way! Our society has digressed in our personal communication skills where almost everything has become a personal attack and offensive. We shouldn't shrink from telling the truth, but we should always focus on critiquing the content and

showing people in Scripture so that the Spirit can convict.

Why is it important to focus both on the content of an argument and to not attack the person?

Question
6

In essence, Paul encourages Timothy to give and do his best for the glory of the Lord. When he states that he **need not be ashamed**, he's talking about doing a mediocre job or putting forth only a little effort to serve the Lord; Paul's not talking about being **ashamed** of the gospel message or his current imprisonment (see [2 Tim 1:8](#)). Here, he wants Timothy to exert full effort in rightly handling God's Word as His minister; he doesn't want him to look back on his life and regret how little he actually served the Lord. Unfortunately, many believers only put forth a little time and effort in serving the Lord and communicating His truth to others. Yet, they go "all-in" in other areas of their lives as we would say, whether it's work, family, or hobbies and recreation. The little time they dedicate to the Lord pales in comparison to the time they invest in these

other areas! We must give our best to the Lord; we must serve Him faithfully and go “all-in” in the ministry to which He has called us.

How would you evaluate your effort in cultivating a relationship with the Lord and how you serve Him?

Question
7

To emphasize Timothy’s responsibility, Paul admonishes him to **rightly** divide **the word of truth**. This simply means that he should know the content of Scripture, teach it accurately and faithfully, and correctly apply it. We too must exercise great care to **rightly** handle God’s

Word—not only when we teach it and present it, but how we live it! To **rightly** handle it, we must have a time where we study and meditate on it on our own. We must also have a time to study it corporately together under Spirit-gifted teachers who can shed more light onto the context. Thus, it’s important not only to attend



worship regularly, but also to be part of a small group or Connect Class. As a church, we need to maximize our opportunities to study God’s Word together, so that we can all grow together and become more like Him each day. Let’s not take for granted the Scripture He has communicated to us, but let us diligently study it, memorize it, and apply it.

How often do you meditate on God’s Word?
How does meditation and study help us to rightly apply it?

Question
8

2 Timothy 2:16-19

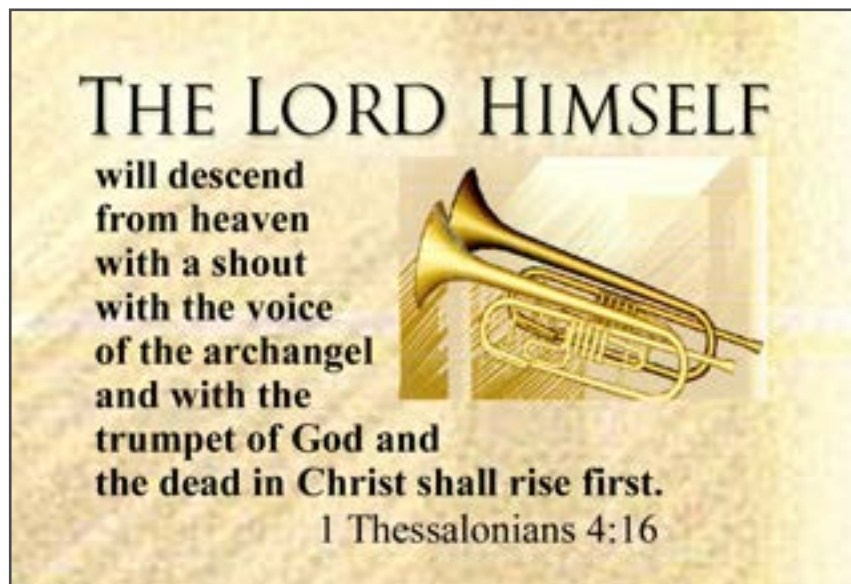
REMINDE OTHERS TO PRECLUDE THE PROFANE:

Finally, Paul arrives at the heart of the problem: two men in Ephesus are teaching error and need to be corrected, so that they don’t negatively influence others and derail their faith. Hence, he tells Timothy **to shun profane and idle babblings** because **they**

Instruct

will increase ungodliness (v. 16). Timothy is to rid the church of any false teaching because it corrupts the hearers and leads the entire church astray. Specifically, Paul lists two ringleaders whose errant **message** has infiltrated the church and spread quickly with disastrous consequences (v. 17). **Hymenaeus** (see also [1 Tim 1:8](#)) and **Philetus** are teaching that **the resurrection is already past** (v. 18). Literally, Paul says that their message spreads like gangrene (i.e. **cancer**) as the flesh-killing infection moves through the body.

These men wrongly denied the bodily resurrection of believers; they asserted that we have already been raised spiritually and this existence here on earth is it! There's nothing else that follows! The Bible doesn't teach that heaven is here on earth. Although God through Christ has indeed raised us spiritually by transforming us from



death to life immediately when we are saved so that we walk in newness of life by imitating Him ([Rom 6:4](#)), we still await an ultimate bodily resurrection just as Christ was physically raised from the dead and His tomb remains empty to this day. Unless Christ returns before we die, we will all perish and be buried in a tomb. On the day of His return, we will

triumphantly rise first from the grave and meet Him along with the believers who remain alive in the air ([1 Thess 4:16-17](#)). We have something to which we can look forward; the best is yet to come! Therefore, we cannot allow doctrinal error in any shape or form to distract us from what the Bible truly says about any issue. We must remain faithful to what God has written and not what other people have said!

What are some doctrinal errors or false messages that spread quickly through the church today?

Question
9

Finally, Paul explains that **the solid foundation of God stands, having the seal** (v. 19). Believers in the church who have an authentic relationship with Christ will stand

on the truth and not compromise. Because they don't compromise and detract from what God has clearly said in His Word, their faith will be proved authentic (i.e. **this seal**). Consequently, **the Lord knows those who are His** because they will **depart from iniquity**. In other words, believers will exhibit evidence that they belong to the Lord. Through Christ, God transforms us to live by His standards and holiness. From time to time, we may err, but we don't constantly live in sin. We learn from our mistakes and grow in Christ. If we don't exhibit this transformation and God never corrects us, then we don't belong to Him! God will always correct those who belong to Him; He will never let us stray without conviction!

As a result, we must exercise great caution about what we believe and how we live as followers of Christ. We need to make sure our lives consistently reflect His pattern and example and we ought to follow the principles He has spoken to us through Scripture. As a community, we need to remain faithful to His Word and faithfully apply it in our lives. We can't pick and choose what we want to believe or how we want to apply it. We need to live faithfully according to the whole counsel of the Lord written in His inspired and inerrant Word. Therefore, let us as His community seek to study the Word of the Lord diligently and remind ourselves and others of the truth contained therein. Let us encourage one another to remain faithful to the Lord as He always remains faithful to us in every way!

In the introduction, we met two gentlemen who had the same goal and carried the same tools with them on their hike in Big Bend National Park, but they had very different results because one allowed distractions to influence his course in life. Although they both had a “working” compass, one allowed external circumstances to influence his direction and it threw him severely off course. As followers of Christ, we can’t let the world dictate or influence our interpretation of Scripture; we must remain faithful to rightly apply God’s Word according to its written and historical context. Therefore, we need to base our understanding off what God has said, not what others have said about Him or His Word. We need to read and study Scripture diligently ourselves so that we know it and can apply it.

God’s Word is truth and the sole standard by which we ought to judge our lives and evaluate our progress. As believers, we must remind others of this truth by pointing them specifically to Scripture. Therefore, we must use Scripture as a litmus test for our beliefs and values. If our beliefs and values don’t match Scripture, we need to change them and conform them to what God Himself has said. We should never try to shape our understanding of Scripture according to our own beliefs. This will always lead to disaster just like the man whose compass was overpowered by the magnet attached to the cell phone in his pocket. Above all, we need to remain faithful to believe God’s Word as He had it written, to learn its principles through diligent study, and to apply them in the right way by practicing them daily in our lives.

Incorporate

How can we as a church encourage one another to remain faithful to the Lord? Why is it important to be accountable to the Lord and each other?

As a community, what does it mean to handle Scripture correctly? How can we ensure that we safeguard the truth found in Scripture?

According to 2 Tim 2:11-19, what characteristics should we exhibit as followers of Christ? How do we know if we are a child of God even though we may err or sin from time to time?

Journal: Document God's Work

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