

# GUARDIANS

**VOL. 2**

**FOUR VIRTUES ESSENTIAL TO LEADING FAITHFULLY  
AND DYING FULFILLED**

**Adapted from a commentary  
by Craig Rees and Jim Weeks.**

Central

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**A Thematic Guide in the Study of Leadership in  
2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy**

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**Guardians Vol. 2**

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**AT THE END** of one's life, it is natural to want to wrap up loose ends. In a sense, for Paul, one loose end was his young protégé in ministry, Timothy. Years earlier, Paul had left Timothy in Ephesus and undertaken yet another missionary journey farther westward. At some point during his travels, he was arrested and taken to Rome, where he awaited execution. Paul hoped he would see Timothy again, but he left behind one final set of instructions and intimate words of encouragement. That letter is now known as 2nd Timothy and contains Paul's last words to his young son in the faith. Although personal in nature, we discover timeless words of exhortation and instruction for Timothy first, but by extension, for every Christian in every age.

***"... what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." [2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:2]***

Developing into the leader God calls Christ-followers to be is a process, not an event. Just as Rome was not built in a day, neither is the church of Jesus Christ. The church is built as Christians, recipients of the gospel planted in their hearts, grow into maturity. John Maxwell wrote: "Most people who want to get ahead do it backward. They think, 'I'll get a bigger job, then I'll learn how to be a leader.' But showing leadership skill is how you get the bigger job in the first place. Leadership isn't a position, it's a process."

#### **Four Foundational Leadership Questions**

Any discussion of Christian leaders, especially the developmental process, is confronted with four foundational questions.

#### **#1: Are Leaders Born or Made?**

This question has been hotly debated for centuries. While the primary task of Christians is to follow Christ, leadership is God's idea. Right at the beginning of the Bible, the leadership task is emphasized. Genesis 1:26 says: ***"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'"***

Humanity, created in the image of God, was born to rule and hold authority. We were created, not simply born, to lead.

#### **#2: Does God Assign Leaders?**

Yes. In Numbers 27:16-17 we read, ***"Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be as sheep that have no shepherd."***

Notice that those who are called to lead the people of God are likened to shepherds. Shepherds watch over the sheep, they protect them from the enemy, they go after them when they wander off, they feed them, and they preside over their births and deaths. Good leaders are like loving shepherds.

#### **#3: Is Biblical Leadership natural or supernatural?**

Romans 12 says that Christian leadership is also a gift from the Holy Spirit. Verse 6: ***"And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them."***

For Christian leaders, the gift of leadership is not a matter of a certain personality type but divine enabling. Being smart or strong or confident, for example, has little importance. Many biblical leaders, like Moses and Gideon, felt ill-equipped for leadership. In the New Testament, many effective leaders were not highly educated. The disciples' lack of education shocked many religious leaders (Acts 4:13). This is not to say that education is unimportant but that personal traits, like education, are secondary to divine enabling.

- Peter was a leader by virtue of practical wisdom (Acts 4:8-12).
- John, by virtue of his heart for God and his love for people (as seen in his writings).
- James, by virtue of practical wisdom (Acts 15:12-21).
- Paul, by virtue of intellectual capacity (as seen in his sermons and epistles).
- Timothy, by virtue of his sacrificial service (Philippians 2:19-21).<sup>1</sup>

Each leader shared all these virtues to varying degrees, but each had a distinct personality strength that uniquely defined them. This demonstrates that leadership is not a matter of human personality but of divine sovereignty. Just as the Spirit's gifts are not reserved for a few outstanding people, so the Spirit's gift of leadership is not reserved for a particular kind of personality.<sup>2</sup>

The gift of leadership is discovered and developed in the same way as other spiritual gifts, that is, through life experience, training, and the maturing process. Even though it is the product of the Spirit's presence and God's grace, this gift requires diligence, faithfulness, hard work, and commitment to be exercised effectively.

#### **#4: What is Christian Leadership?**

At its very core Christian leadership is influence. In Matthew 5:13-16 Jesus says:

**“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”**

Salt influences the food that we eat. When we open a closet, it is the light that rushes in not the darkness that floods out. In Matthew 5 Jesus calls His followers to embrace their calling to influence and shine wherever the Lord God has placed them.

John Maxwell reduces leadership to this the idea of influence:

“Leadership is influence. Nothing more. Nothing less. It is about influencing others in a worthwhile cause. It is not dependent on titles or positions. It is dependent on someone catching a vision from God, and mobilizing others to join them in its fulfillment. When this happens, leadership arises in its purest form.”<sup>3</sup>

With Maxwell's words in mind, let us revisit Paul's words to Timothy with which we began:

**“... what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”**

In his final letter, Paul instructed Timothy further about guarding the gospel as leadership responsibility is passed to the next generation. Leadership always begins with a need. Paul saw the need to ensure that his legacy did not end with Timothy. The apostle tasked Timothy to develop other leaders as a matter of urgency.

#### **Leading as the Maturing Follower**

Christian leaders share a common understanding that while called to lead, they are not “The Leader” but models of the *maturing follower*. God enables and empowers those He calls to leadership regardless of any natural leader's ability, for He calls them to follow Christ first and foremost. In the process of following Christ, the leader matures and becomes first, more like Christ, and second, the embodiment of Christ to those they influence. The

<sup>1</sup> William D. Lawrence, *Distinctives of Christian Leadership*, Bibliotheca Sacra, (July-September 1987) p. 321

<sup>2</sup> William D. Lawrence, *Distinctives*, p. 321

<sup>3</sup> John Maxwell, *Equip: Million Leaders Mandate* (2003), Book 1, page 5

process of becoming a Christ-like leader is foundational to the leadership task. Leading is, first and foremost, following and maturing.

#### Consider the following Scriptures:

- 1 John 2:6: Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.
- 2 Corinthians 3:17-18: Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.
- 1 Corinthians 11:1: Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.
- Romans 8:29: For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.
- 1 Peter 2:21: To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps.

Who we are and are becoming is critical to healthy leadership. The study of 2nd Timothy we chart in *Guardians Vol. 2* magnifies four virtues we consider to be at the heart of the following maturing process.

1. Knowing: ***I am reminded of your sincere faith (2 Timothy 1:5); Continue in what you have learned and firmly believed knowing from whom you learned it... (2 Timothy 3:14).***

*Christian Leaders know they belong to Jesus Christ. It is one thing to know about Jesus, but it is quite different to KNOW Him. The Christian Leader knows, trusts, and believes the gospel of Christ; and imparts what they know to others by modeling and teaching. What you know – and WHO you know – is apparent to others. It was clear to Paul that Timothy knew Jesus Christ. Still, the Christian Leader is in constant prayer and study to grow ever closer to Christ and to learn God's word and seek God's direction in order to lead others in the right spiritual direction. Knowing*

*who has saved them naturally results in a whole-hearted commitment to Christ's Lordship: to His reign and rule in our lives.*

2. Being: Paul uses a strong negative example; **Timothy is NOT TO BE as the world, "...People will BE lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness but denying its power. Avoid such people" (2 Timothy 3:2-5)**

*The Christian Leader has entered a newly settled state – an internal spiritual condition. This state is exemplified by joy, peace, love – and all the other fruits of the Spirit. Being is an internal condition, a commitment to Christ's Lordship. Being is about character; integrity – a parallel between what we say and how we live, in what we believe, and how we express it; do our attitudes, words, and actions match our professed beliefs? DO they act as magnets to draw others to Christ? If they do, people will respond to us as leaders. "Paul never lacked followers. His qualities of character irresistibly lifted him above colleagues and associates."<sup>4</sup>*

3. Living: **"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, and equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)**

*While BEING is internal, it is displayed externally in how Christian Leaders live daily. Being in a godly spiritual condition leads most naturally to living a lifestyle that displays Christ's glory and brings honor to His name. More than just directing people, it is changing them. We can get them to do what we want, but if we haven't changed their heart, we have not led them to God and shown them His will for their lives. Live as a Christ-follower; the chief characteristic is submission to Christ as our leader. Christian leaders need*

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<sup>4</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *Paul the Leader*, p. 39



to show others where Christ, the ultimate Leader, is going. Meditating and praying over His word results in positive life **change to equip us to live as God desires – with the competent ability to do the good work He has prepared for us.** The Christian Leader is trained in righteousness by the Word, they understand it and use it to gently teach and correct those who follow them.

And by the example of their life, they move people from where they are to where God wants them to be. Once a leader understands God's will, they must make every effort by persuasion, example, sacrifice, and hard work to move followers from their self-focused goals to God-centered purposes.

4. Reproducing: **“what you heard from me...entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” (2 Timothy 2:2)**

**Paul's instructions to Timothy are to remember what he has been taught and pass it along to those he teaches, so they will pass the same message to those who come after them. It is an unbroken chain of faith from Christians today back to the origins of our faith, passed from one generation to another.** The Christian Leader is always duplicating themselves. One goal of a spiritual leader is that people would come to know Jesus Christ and glorify Him in all they do. Christian Leaders are influential and ambitious for Christ - they cause others to listen and respond to the call of the gospel. The leader causes others to respond, move, act, live according to God's plans, and spread the good news. This kind of leadership can never be self-generated. It is always the result of the power of the Holy Spirit working through those who are obedient to His commands.

**These four virtues are central to 2 Timothy 2:2.** Look at the verse a third time, noting how each of these virtues underlies each of the key phrases:

**what you have heard:** Timothy heard Paul teach the Truth of the Gospel.

**from me in the presence:** Paul had a presence-based ministry in that he was present with others and known by them.

**of many witnesses:** These witnesses gather to discover the truth and can testify that Paul is a man of integrity.

**entrust** Timothy was commanded to entrust, a command that would ask Timothy to commit to ensuring the truth was reproduced in others.

**to faithful men** Faithfulness combines the idea of people who take the truth working inside them and express it through a lifestyle of obedience.

**who will be able to teach** The task of reproduction and multiplication continues.

**others also:** through the faithful to the faithful.

At the heart of leadership in 2 Timothy are the virtues of knowing, being, living, and reproducing. The following chart reveals how easily the challenges to Timothy can be categorized under these four virtues:

**KNOW:**

- 1:4-7: Leaders know their flock, confront sin (v15-16) and encourage faithfulness.
- 2:8: Leaders know the truth of the Gospel and agree to view all things, even their chains, in the light of this truth.
- 3:14-17: Leaders are committed to deepening their knowledge of the Scriptures and to put it to effect in their life and ministry (vv16-17)
- 4:3: Leaders are committed to ensuring that the truth of the Scriptures is presented and retold.
- 4:9: Leaders offer practical instructions to people on an array of practical, personal, or spiritual topics.

**BE:**

- 1:12: Leaders are committed to growing beyond where they are at present.

- 3:2-5 In 2nd Timothy, Paul often uses negative examples to point up positive attributes leaders should possess.
- 3:15: They continue to grow in Christlikeness through each stage of their lives and challenge their leaders to do the same.
- 4:6: They are hope-filled people even though they experience extreme difficulty.

#### **LIVE:**

- 1:8: Leaders show their faith to others.
- 2:14: Leaders challenge others to spiritual growth by setting out tangible ways are to live (vv1-19).
- 2:20: They encourage people to a lifestyle of godliness (vv20-26)
- 3:1-13: Whereas the ungodly are deceitful at heart (3:1-9), Christian Leaders set a counter-cultural example.
- 3:14: They make themselves available to others for their faithfulness to be seen in action.
- 3:16-17: Leaders understand the inestimable value of every part of God's Word, and they know how to use it to teach others correctly.

#### **REPRODUCE:**

- 1:11: Leaders are committed to sharing the good news of Jesus with others.
- 2:2: Leaders are entrusted with the precious gospel; they are tasked with identifying new leaders and passing the same truth to them.
- 4:1: Leaders take every opportunity to pass along their knowledge.
- 4:2: Leaders preach the Word faithfully when it is welcomed and even when it is not.
- 4:9-18: Leaders encourage, rebuke, warn and challenge others to continue being faithful and fruitful.

In Paul's letters generally and here in 2 Timothy, **godly leaders are chiefly characterized as people of integrity, committed to the truth of the Gospel and passionate about seeing that truth embraced by and reproduced in others.**

We have noted how easily Paul's understanding of leadership can be encapsulated under four virtues: **knowing, being, living, and reproducing**. In Guardians Volume 2, we explore these four virtues to discover how Christian Leaders influence the people God has placed around them.

#### **So What?**

As we move forward, you are encouraged to consider where each of these four virtues, knowing, being, living and reproducing, stand in your life today.

- Where are you strong?
- Where might you need to grow?
- How can the areas in which you are confident bolster the areas you need to work on?
- Are you consistently maturing?

Perhaps you are confident in your Bible knowledge, yet you are reluctant to share Christ with other people. Or maybe you are living out your faith in bountiful service to others yet failing to invest adequate time in Bible study. No one has these four virtues working in perfect balance. When one area is growing it is often true that such progress comes at the expense of another area. We are all a work in progress and the key is to keep maturing, enabled and encouraged by the Spirit's untiring efforts.

***“And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion on the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6).***

#### **Conclusion**

When studying any great leader, Paul included, it is tempting to dissect the life history of that person, list their various personality traits, then assign their many successes to one of more of those aspects of their character. In the example of secular leaders that seems sensible. Alexander the Great was a young man of uncommon ambition and courage; he personally led his army and conquered most of the known Mediterranean world. Winston Churchill was an astute observer of human nature and an unparalleled orator; his rousing speeches and forceful personality inspired a nation to resist

and overcome the largest war machine of the age. But ambition, courage, intelligence, and speaking ability, while assets to any leader, are secondary when it comes to effective Christian leadership. Of primary importance is the way we are following Christ to become more Him. The more like Him we are, the more influential our ministry will be.

**Format**

We have structured this companion guide into individual lessons under each virtue. There are 10 lessons in all.

## Being

noun / 'bēiNG/  
beings, plural

### 1. Existence

The will of God brought the ministries of both Paul (1:1-2) and Timothy into *being* (1:3-7)

### 2. Living; being alive

The Gospel brings the promise of **being** alive for eternity (1:1b)

### 3. The nature or essence of a person

Timothy's faith was sincere because it had penetrated to the core of his **being** (1:5)

### 4. A real creature, esp. an intelligent one

Jesus is the Christ and appeared in order to **be** the Savior, abolishing the power of death (1:10)

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### 5. A human being

As a human **being** with cognitive ability, Timothy's *knowledge* content was to deepen so that he could shake off anxiety and be sustained by the power of God (1:8-9)

### 6. A supernatural entity

A supernatural divine **being** (1:1,9), God Himself, has power to create, save, sustain, call, and entrust the Gospel to Timothy (1:9-14)

*Timothy had entered a new settled state – an internal spiritual condition. This state was exemplified by joy, peace, love, patience – and other fruits of the Spirit.*

*For every Christ follower, being is about character and integrity. Paul challenges Timothy to ensure his attitude, words, and actions match his beliefs. If they did, people would be forced to respond to the truth that he presented as God's leader. We are to **BE** positive examples of the transforming power of Christ. Leadership is first and foremost about being ...*

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# VIRTUE

# BEING

# #1:

## BE what they are called to BE (1:1-7)

### 2 Timothy 1: 1-7

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus,

<sup>2</sup> To Timothy, my beloved child:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

### Guard the Deposit Entrusted to You

<sup>3</sup> I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day.

<sup>4</sup> As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy.

<sup>5</sup> I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

<sup>6</sup> For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands,

<sup>7</sup> for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

### #1: CALLING

“An apostle by the will of God” is used in 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians. 1 Corinthians adds the word “called” or “by call” - *kleetos*.

1 Corinthians 9:14-23 outlines that Biblical calling has three factors:

a \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Corinthians 9:14)

a \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Corinthians 9:16-17)

a \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

**QUESTION:** In your opinion, which of these three factors is the most overlooked and under-appreciated? Why?

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*“When principles that run against your deepest convictions begin to win the day, then battle is your **calling**, and peace has become sin; you must, at the price of dearest peace, lay your convictions bare before friend and enemy, with all the fire of your faith.” [Abraham Kuyper (Dutch Theologian)]*

Practically speaking, if we want to help someone discover their calling, we need to:

1. ... help them connect who they are and what they are called to do.
2. ... help them understand the external, internal, and heavenly factors brought together in a Biblical call.
3. ... be close enough to speak into their lives but further enough along to motivate.

### #2: MEMORY

Four-fold repetition in verses 3-6:

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(v3)  
(v4)  
(v5)  
(v6)

**NOTE:** Common to the memory functions of Paul in verses 3-7 is a *person*, not *events*. Memory has a \_\_\_\_\_ connotation.

**Questions:**

- Is remembering something an easy thing for you to do?
- Is there anything in particular that you do to help you remember?
- What important people and places do you choose to remember?
- Are there any special times that you would like to always remember?

**Why remember?**

We remember to see our existence as continuing God's progressively revealed plan stretching over history (v7).

**#3: POWER**

V5: "Dwelt" occurs twice.

Indwelling \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Corinthians 6:16; John 14:23)

Indwelling \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 8:11; 2 Timothy 1:14)

Indwelling \_\_\_\_\_ (Colossians 3:16)

Indwelling \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 7:17)

**Question:** Paul was sure about the power of God. Why? How can we be so sure?

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**Principle:** there is a difference between \_\_\_\_\_ power and \_\_\_\_\_ power.

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**Blanks:**

Commissioning, above, compulsion, within, challenge, without, remember, recall, reminded, remind, relational, God, Spirit, Word, sin, inherent, indwelling

**BE Courageous (2 Timothy 1:8-12)**

Verses 8-14 are one sentence in the Greek. Four concepts are central to Timothy being courageous:

**Courage Concept #1: Overcome (Verses 8, 12, 16)**

**QUESTION:** Is shame a biblical concept? Consider Jeremiah 6:15, Psalm 25:3, and the following words from Heschel, and consider the type of shame we are not to overcome.

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*"How embarrassing for man to be the greatest miracle on earth and not to understand it! How embarrassing for man to live in the shadow of greatness and to ignore it, to be a contemporary of God and not to sense it. ... "Embarrassment is the awareness of an incongruity of character and challenge, of perceptivity and reality, of knowledge and understanding, of mystery and comprehension. ... "Embarrassment is a response to the discovery that in living we either replenish or frustrate a wondrous expectation. It involves an awareness of the grandeur of existence that may be wasted, of a waiting ignored, of unique moments missed. It is a protection against the outburst of inner evils, against arrogance, hubris, self-deification. The end of embarrassment would be the end of humanity."<sup>5</sup>*

<sup>5</sup> Abraham J. Heschel, *Who Is Man?*, Stanford University Press, Stanford), CT, 1965, pg. 112-1139

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**Principle:** We are to be ashamed of our \_\_\_\_\_ but not ashamed of \_\_\_\_\_ them as \_\_\_\_\_ as necessary.

**The Shame We Must Overcome**

**Verse 8:** does not imply that Timothy was ashamed but is rather a challenge for him not to start being ashamed. Paul was not suffering for sin but for Christ. Suffering for the gospel is the norm, not the exception (Matthew 5:10-12; John 15:18-21; 16:1-2; 17:14; Acts 14:22; Romans 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; 6:4-10; 11:23-28; Philippians 1:29; 1 Thessalonians 3:3; 2 Timothy 3:12; James 1:2-4).

**Verse 12:** Paul’s sufferings were evidence of his success in proclaiming the gospel.

**Courage Concept #2: \_\_\_\_\_ The Truth (Verses 9-10)**

*“We do not really know the truth unless we are doing the truth, and only in doing the truth will we finally know the truth.”*  
– Robert McAfee Brown

**Question:** In an age when we are more concerned with academic knowledge than transforming knowledge, how do we ensure that what we learn moves our feet, not just our head?

**“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup> For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. <sup>24</sup> For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. <sup>25</sup> But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.”**

– James 1:22-25

For truth to become transformed from academic to engaged knowledge, it must pass through three stages:

**#1: \_\_\_\_\_ For The Truth**

**Principle:** We will only really search for the truth when we are willing to \_\_\_\_\_.

**#2: \_\_\_\_\_ With The Truth**

**Principle:** It is not \_\_\_\_\_ faith that matters so much as \_\_\_\_\_ faith.

**#3: \_\_\_\_\_ The Truth**

**Principle:** It is a lot easier to \_\_\_\_\_ upon the truth than to \_\_\_\_\_ the truth.

**GROUP:** Take a moment to reflect on those three stages. Which one is the hardest for you? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Without having much time to reflect, what strikes you immediately as being something you can do to embody that stage in your own life?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Courage Concept #3: \_\_\_\_\_ The Time (Verses 9,10,12)**

In verses 9-12 Paul challenges Timothy to courageously use his time to make an eternal difference:

- Past – ages (v9)
- Present – now (v10)





which all involved proclaiming. This noun is from the verb *kerusso*, which meant “to publicly announce or proclaim.” It came to have a technical sense as a way of referring to apostolic preaching (*kerygma*), especially as it appears in the recorded sermons of Paul and Peter in the book of Acts, but its basic meaning is much broader.

**Apostle** (to send)

Jesus chose 12 of His disciples to be with Him in a special sense and called them *apostles*. The verb form is often used of Jesus being sent from the Father (see Matthew 10:40; 15:24). It was used of those who knew Christ during His physical life and ministry (Acts 1:21-26). Paul claimed that he also had seen the Lord in his Damascus vision and call (Acts 9). These men were uniquely called and equipped by the Spirit to record and explain the events, teachings, and miracles of Jesus’ life. The term came to be used of an ongoing gift in the church (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11). Their exact function is never specified; it may be church planting in new areas of regional leadership and oversight leadership (Acts 14:4,14; 18:5; 1 Corinthians 4:9; Galatians 1:19; Philippians 2:25; 1 Thessalonians 2:6).

**Teacher**

This is listed as a spiritual gift in Acts 13:1; Romans 12:6-7; 1 Corinthians 12:28 and James 3. It is combined with the gift of pastor in Ephesians 4:11, 1 Timothy 3:2 and 2 Timothy 2:24. When used as a separate gift, it may refer to training of new converts, but when linked to pastor, it may refer to the training of believers in doctrine (2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17).

**QUESTION:** Timothy had a calling, and with that calling came specific tasks, one of which is to preach – to bear public witness to – the gospel of Christ Jesus. We are all called to this task. How does that truth make you feel?

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If you needed to share the gospel right now, could you? If not, why?

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Are there any of the truths in verses 9-10 that you need to understand better to be able to share the gospel more effectively? (Note: Not all of this needs to be included all the time.)

*Cross out those that you are confident you can explain:*

<b>saved</b>	<b>called</b>	<b>works</b>	<b>purpose</b>
	<b>grace</b>	<b>Christ</b>	
<b>appearing</b>	<b>Savior</b>	<b>abolished death</b>	<b>life</b>
		<b>immortality</b>	

What are you going to do to prepare yourself?

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**Blanks**

Shame, sins, confessing, frequently, embrace, search, search, ourselves, engage, enunciated, embraced, embody, reflect, reflect, redeem, performç

**BE Faithful (2 Timothy 1:13-18)**

***13 Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14 By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you. 15 You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. 16 May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains, 17 but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me earnestly and found me — 18 may the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that Day! — and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.***

God has always had a remnant of faithful followers, but that remnant is never the majority. In the Old Testament, sad to say, the majority are typically wrong and unfaithful. In this passage the apostle Paul encourages Timothy to be faithful to his calling. He makes the point by contrasting his faithful words and actions with those of “all who are in Asia.” If Timothy is to be faithful, he would have to follow the example of the few and be an example to the many. That isn’t easy. There is no shortcut for faithfulness.

**QUESTIONS:**

In what ways can Christians be tempted to take a shortcut to faithfulness today?

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What do you suppose is the basis for staying the course?

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**How can Timothy remain faithful?**

**Faithful Facet #1: By Following The Pattern Of Sound Words (Verse 13)**

**Sound words:** This is a recurrent theme in the pastoral letters that refers to healthy teachings (see 1 Timothy 1:10; 4:6; 6:3; 2 Timothy 1:13; 4:3, 4; Titus 1:9,13; 2:1, 2). This verse reflects the presence and problems caused by false teachers.

**QUESTION:** How do sound words aid faithfulness?

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**Pattern:** Hupotuposis – a sketch or first draft such as that done by painters when they begin a picture; a delineation, sketch, concise representation or form (2 Timothy 1:13); a pattern, example (1 Timothy 1:16); also, a sketch as used of an architect’s designs (i.e., a blueprint). Paul had given Timothy the overall plan.

*Sound words* draw a sketch of faithfulness along whose lines the Christian can travel. Central to the word pattern is the word *tupos* - (too’-pos) which means a stamp or scar; by analogy, a shape. It is used in 1 Timothy 1:16 and 2 Timothy 1:13. This was a secular, business term that referred to a mold or a stamp from which a coin was made. Paul’s encouragement to Timothy was to be a living example of an authentic and accurate reflection of the Scriptures. So *tupos* is used as an example, or pattern to be imitated and followed (Philippians 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 1:7; 2 Thessalonians 3:9; 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7; 1 Peter 5:3; 1 Corinthians 10:6, 11).

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**QUESTION:** How are others impacted by your example?

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**Read Genesis 26:7; 12:10-14 and 20:1-4.** What lessons do we learn about the way that parents' examples shape the world's future by the way they shape their children's values?

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**Principles:**

Children are deeply affected by their parents' \_\_\_\_\_.  
Parenting includes both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**READ** Matthew 4:1 and Hebrews 12:12-13. What lessons do we learn about the example of Jesus and how that should affect us?

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**Principles:**

Jesus sets the \_\_\_\_\_ example.  
We are responsible for following Christ, the \_\_\_\_\_ example.  
We are responsible for the \_\_\_\_\_ we set.

**Faithful Facet #2: Imitating The Life Of Faith And Love (Verse 13)**

**... in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.** The teaching is to be held, preached, and practiced, not as a mere schedule of conduct – however excellent – but with the strong conviction of faith and fervor of love. The verse *reflects the manner in which leaders are to retain, pass on, and de-*

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*pend the truth of the gospel (see 1 Corinthians 13). Faithfulness is preserved through actively living a life of love.*

**QUESTION:** What do Romans 8:38-39, John 3:16 and Psalm 136:1 teach us about God's love?

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**Principles:**

God's love is beyond \_\_\_\_\_.  
God's love is \_\_\_\_\_.  
God's love is \_\_\_\_\_.  
God's love is \_\_\_\_\_.

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and John 21:17. What principles can you draw about a life of love from these texts?

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**Principles:**

Loving is more important than \_\_\_\_\_ .  
Love \_\_\_\_\_ others.  
Loving God means \_\_\_\_\_ Him.  
Loving God requires \_\_\_\_\_ we have and are.

**Faithful Facet #3: Guarding The Deposit He Was Given (Verse 14)**

In 1 Timothy 6:20, Paul urged Timothy to guard "what was committed" to him. God had also made an investment in Timothy's life (cf. 2 Timothy 1:12), and Timothy must not let that fail. The phrase occurs only here in the New

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Testament (see 2 Timothy 1:12). Although the challenge of verse 14a appears to place the responsibility solely on Timothy, it is God who gives Timothy the ability to guard the deposit. God protects. God enables us to be faithful.

**“The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. 3 I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.”**

— Psalm 18:2-3

This verse teaches us that God’s protection is unlimited. David characterized God’s care with five military symbols:

- (1) a \_\_\_\_\_ that can’t be moved;
- (2) a \_\_\_\_\_ or place of safety where the enemy can’t follow;
- (3) a \_\_\_\_\_ that comes between us and harm;
- (4) the \_\_\_\_\_ of our salvation; and
- (5) a \_\_\_\_\_ high above our enemies.

If we need to guard anything important to the Lord, we can count on God’s protection!

**QUESTION:**

Read Luke 21:17-19. What principles can you glean from this passage about God’s protecting power?

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**Principles:**

God’s protection is \_\_\_\_\_

God’s protection is for \_\_\_\_\_

**Faithful facet #4: Submitting to the SPIRIT’S POWER (v14)**

It is only through the Holy Spirit that Timothy or any of us can guard God’s deposit with us.

**QUESTION:** Read Judges 3:10 and Matthew 10:19-20. What do these passages teach us about the Holy Spirit’s protecting power?

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**Principles:**

The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ believers.

The Holy Spirit is \_\_\_\_\_ in times of \_\_\_\_\_.

The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ *sound words*.

Although Timothy is called to guard the deposit, this very same Holy Spirit is the means and power by which it is done. G. Campbell Morgan said that the best name for the Spirit is “the other Jesus.” Here is a comparison of the work and titles of the Son and Spirit:

1. Spirit called “Spirit of Jesus” or similar expressions (cf. Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 4:6; I Peter 1:11).
2. Both called by the same terms
  - a. “truth”: Jesus (John 14:6), Spirit (John 14:17; 16:13)
  - b. “advocate”: Jesus (I John 2:1), Spirit (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7)
  - c. “Holy”: Jesus (Mark 1:24; Luke 1:35; 4:34; Acts 3:14; 4:27, 30), Spirit (Luke 1:35)
3. Both indwell believers
  - a. Jesus (Matthew 28:20; John 14:20, 23; 15:4-5; Romans 8:10; 2

Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 1:27)

- b. Spirit (John 14:16-17; Romans 8:9, 11; I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 2 Timothy c.1:14) Father (John 14:23; 2 Corinthians 6:16)

### **Blanks**

Actions, words, actions, perfect, supreme, example, measure, eternal, sacrificial, inexhaustible, spiritual gifts, benefits, serving, everything, rock, fortress, shield, strength, stronghold, certain, eternity, empowers, present, hardship, enables.

## Know

verb /nō/ knew, past tense; knowing, present participle; known, past participle; knows, 3rd-person singular present

### 1. Be aware of through observation, inquiry, or information

I. Timothy was to know who he was and whose he was (2:15).

### 2. Have knowledge or information concerning people (2:17) and the gospel (2:18)

### 3. Be absolutely certain or sure about something

I. Timothy knew the truth was the truth (2:11-13).

### 4. Have developed a relationship with (someone) through meeting and spending time with them; be familiar or friendly with

I. Timothy knew and respected godly leaders (2:2).

### 5. Have a good command of (a subject or language)

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I. Timothy was to know the gospel and remain single-minded in focus (2:3-4).

### 6. Recognize (someone or something)

I. Timothy should be able to know authentic teachers (2:2).

### 7. Be familiar or acquainted with (something)

I. Timothy was charged with knowing the truth of his faith.

### 8. Have personal experience of (an emotion or situation)

I. Someone knows he is secure, no matter what (2:11-13).

### 9. Regard or perceive as having a specified characteristic

I. Timothy was to be known as a sanctified servant (2:20-26).

### 10. Give (someone or something) a particular name or title

I. Timothy was to know people well enough to select them for leadership (2:2).

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# VIRTUE

# #2:

# KNOW

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Be able to distinguish one person or thing from (another)  
A leader knows his flock and will distinguish between wolves and sheep (2:17).

Christian leaders know they belong to Jesus Christ. It is one thing to know about Jesus, but it is quite different to know Him. The Christian leader knows, trusts, and believes the gospel of Christ, and he imparts what he knows to others by modeling and teaching. ”

*“I am reminded of your sincere faith (2 Timothy 1:5); Continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ... (2 Timothy 3:14).”*

What you know – and who you know – is apparent to others. It was clear to Paul that Timothy knew Jesus Christ. Still, the Christian leader is in constant prayer and study, growing ever closer to Christ, learning God’s Word and seeking God’s direction to lead others in the right spiritual direction. Knowing who has saved him naturally results in a wholehearted commitment to His Lordship.”

## What the Leader KNOWS (2 Timothy 2:1-10)

In chapter 2, Paul uses a series of seven images about Christian Leadership and service: a teacher (verse 2), a soldier (verses 3-4), an athlete (verse 5), a farmer (verses 6-7), a workman (verses 15-19), a vessel (verses 20-22) and a slave (verses 23-26).

“With each example, Paul gives us a picture of the character and work of Christ-following leaders in life and ministry. Like all good leaders, Paul does not speak in general or abstract terms that can be too idealistic or unattainable in real life. He provides concrete, specific examples of devotion and defection, of positive and negative action, and of faithful versus unfaithful role models.”<sup>6</sup>

**“You therefore, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:1-2).**

**You therefore:** This relates back to the previous section (1:15-18), in which Paul draws a distinction between Timothy, who remains faithful, and those who have abandoned him.

## What is Christian character?

Christian character is the fruit of the Spirit deep inside that is \_\_\_\_\_ when we face hardship.

## What components help develop the Christ-like character of a Christian?

### Character Component #1: \_\_\_\_\_ (2:1-2)

“Paul is about to tell Timothy some hard truths about ministry, but before telling him about the suffering and the opposition he will face in his future, Paul again reminds the young protégé that the power to accomplish his task comes not from within himself but from the Lord.”<sup>7</sup>

**be strengthened:** This can be translated two ways:

- (1) “continue to be strengthened,” or
- (2) “continue to be strong”

**ISSUE:** Does Timothy \_\_\_\_\_ in the strengthening or does \_\_\_\_\_ do the strengthening for him?

“In chapter 1 Paul issued a number of commands to Timothy (1:6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14). He then showed Timothy that he could rely on the Holy Spirit for the enablement to accomplish all that Paul asked of him (1:6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14). In 2:1, Paul brings those two thoughts together, continuing the series of commands but stressing that God’s grace given through Christ is the agent that allows Timothy to successfully accomplish what is commanded.”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Craig Rees, Jim Weeks, “Virtual Reality: Four Virtues Central to Leading Faithfully and Dying Fulfilled, A Thematic Study of Leadership in 2nd Timothy,” page 54.

<sup>7</sup> Craig Rees, Jim Weeks, “Virtual Reality,” page 54.

<sup>8</sup> Craig Rees, Jim Weeks, “Virtual Reality,” p. 53

**in the grace:** Grace is more than the gift of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ love; it is a divine enabling.

• **“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me” (1 Corinthians 15:10).**

• **“But to each one of us, grace has been given as Christ apportioned it” (Ephesians 4:4-7).**

**Principle:** A link exists between \_\_\_\_\_ grace and the \_\_\_\_\_ power of God.

• **“With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:33).**

• **“The Lord’s hand was with them and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord. News of this reached the ears of the church in Jerusalem and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts” Acts 11:21-23.**

**The moment we were saved by grace, we received grace-strength for two specific things:**

a) strength to \_\_\_\_\_ sin

**“Where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness” (Romans 5:20-21).**

**Principle:** Every sin we commit is done not by submitting to a power \_\_\_\_\_ than us but by submitting to a power \_\_\_\_\_ than us.

b) strength to \_\_\_\_\_ hardship

**“Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:7-9).**

**CHARACTER CHALLENGE:** to grow in character grow in your \_\_\_\_\_ of God’s \_\_\_\_\_ (Colossians 1:6).

**APPLICATION:**

Which of these Scriptures about grace has been a revelation to you? What struck you about it?

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In what area of God’s grace do you need most need to grow?

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**Character Component #2: \_\_\_\_\_ (2:3-4)**

**“Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him” (2 Timothy 2:3-4).**

**Share in suffering:** As in 1:8, this is a continuing command – we will suffer, and we are expected to endure it.

**as a good soldier:** “The image of a soldier was one of Paul’s favorites (cf. Romans 6:13; 7:23; 1 Corinthians 9:7; 2 Corinthians 6:7; Ephesians 6:11-18) ... The image of a soldier is appropriate for all Christian workers, but Paul may have thought it especially appropriate in Timothy’s situation, battling the heretics and standing his ground theologically.”<sup>9</sup>



**When we look at the Scriptures we discover that Christians maintain the right kind of focus by:**

**accepting that the \_\_\_\_\_ of God must take priority over the \_\_\_\_\_ of life.**

**entangled in civilian pursuits:** Nothing distracted a soldier from absolute obedience to and focus on an order from his superior.

“Paul’s appeal shows the importance of developing an ability to distinguish between doing things and doing the best things. Servants of Christ are not merely to be well-rounded dabblers in all types of trivial pursuits. They are tough-minded devotees of Christ who constantly choose the right priorities from a list of potential selections.”<sup>10</sup>

**How do we do that?**

**Identify and avoid \_\_\_\_\_**

Is there anything that weakens your commitment to keep Christ first in your life? How can you minimize the distractions that threaten your devotion to Him?

**Identify and avoid \_\_\_\_\_**

Don’t believe someone simply because the person sounds like an authority. Study the Scriptures and ensure that the Bible remains your authoritative guide.

**“Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything” (2 Timothy 2:7).**

**Think over:** This is an imperative, a command. Christians are not to rush into action without pausing to pray for guidance and seek affirmation from God.

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<sup>9</sup> Craig Rees, Jim Weeks, “Virtual Reality,” p. 57

<sup>10</sup> Thomas D. Lea, Hayne P Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, pg. 203

**APPLICATION:**

What phrase or verse in this section is worthy of further consideration and prayer? What implications could this verse have for the focus of your life or ministry?

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**Character Challenge:** Focus is needed because both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are guaranteed!

**Character Component #3: DISCIPLINE (2:5-10)**

In this section Paul draws attention to the “athlete” and “farmer.” Although the athletic metaphor appears powerful and glamorous, the farming metaphor has connotations of hard work. Common to both metaphors is the idea of discipline.

The athlete competes **according to the rules:** The original phrase designated a professional athlete as opposed to an amateur. What differentiates the two? Dedication and determination.

The farmer is **hard-working:** This denotes toil to the point of exhaustion.

“Paul means that Christian leaders are to be hard at work for Christ, not placid bystanders. The expected normal characteristic of a Christian leader is a willingness to put forth constant, intense effort.”<sup>11</sup>

**Why discipline myself?**

**the first share:** Whereas the athlete worked for future reward, the emphasis with the farmer is on present benefits. The farmer produces fruit for others, but he profits by taking the first share.

**PRINCIPLE:** it is out of the \_\_\_\_\_ of his life that the Christian \_\_\_\_\_.

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**“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).**

**Character Challenge:** \_\_\_\_\_ is needed, and the work is hard, but we \_\_\_\_\_ by having our \_\_\_\_\_ changed first!

**APPLICATION:**

Christian leaders are always ordinary people with extraordinary gifts. We truly appreciate our ordinary state when we commit to hone our gift by developing it! How are you developing your gifts?

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What is the Lord saying to you about your discipline through these verses?

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**SUMMARY**

Paul’s teaching uses examples from ordinary life – teachers, soldiers, athletes, and farmers. He does not portray extraordinary people in unusual circumstances but ordinary people from everyday life. That is the Christian life: normal experiences and challenges, not a life of luxury without strife. The metaphors remind us that Christ calls ordinary people and that we must be prepared to study, focus, and discipline ourselves. Christ-like character is produced in us when we commit to working hard and doing right – no matter what.

**Blanks**

especially evidenced, strength, participate, God, undeserved, unmerited, receiving, strengthening, overcome, stronger, weaker, endure, knowledge,

grace, focus, greater things, great things, destructive distractions, destructive instructions, suffering, distractions, abundance, ministers, discipline, benefit, character

## The Character of a Christian Leader (2 Timothy 2:11-19)

**The saying is trustworthy, for:**

**If we have died with Him, we will also live with Him;**

**<sup>12</sup> if we endure, we will also reign with Him;**

**if we deny Him, He also will deny us;**

**<sup>13</sup> if we are faithless, He remains faithful —  
for He cannot deny Himself.**

### A Worker Approved by God

**<sup>14</sup> Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. <sup>15</sup> Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. <sup>16</sup> But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, <sup>17</sup> and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, <sup>18</sup> who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. <sup>19</sup> But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."**

They KNOW they are \_\_\_\_\_ (verses 11-13).

Insecurity is triggered by uncertainty and fueled by fear. In verses 11-13 Paul introduces an ancient Christian hymn that counters the uncertainties of both life and human nature with the certainty of the life that is to come.

"The Christian leaders' focus on the future influences their lives in the present."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Craig Rees, Jim Weeks, "Virtual Reality," p. 65

The hymn centers on the *if-then* clause and has an unexpected twist that causes the faithfulness of God to take center stage. In this section the apostle is encouraging Timothy, tempted by timidity, to be bold in the knowledge that God can be trusted to bring him safely through the challenges that await him (verses 14-19).

"... if ..." occurs four times in two verses (11b-13a).

Verse 13: "***If we are faithless, He remains faithful. He cannot deny Himself.***"

The repetition of "deny" in verse 13 draws attention to the fact that the idea of being "faithless" has a relational connotation: It speaks of broken contact, not a lack of effort. Being faithless refers not to momentary failure or situational disobedience but to relational detachment of an unbridgeable kind.

"Is denial unfaithfulness? Yes. However, not all unfaithfulness is denial that results in His denial of us. The unfaithful believer will not lose salvation (1 John 5:13) or all his reward (1 Peter 1:4) but will lose some of his reward (1 Corinthians 3:12-15; Luke 19:24-26).<sup>13</sup>

### The BASIS for Security

In addition to strength, focus and discipline, which we identified as key components of the Christian character, we can add security. But what is the basis for that security?

In this text we discover three sources of Christian leaders' security:

**Secure Source #1: knowing God's \_\_\_\_\_**

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<sup>13</sup> Craig Rees, Jim Weeks, "Virtual Reality," p. 66

**"Then Moses said to God, 'If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?' 14 God said to Moses, 'I am who I am.' And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel, 'I am has sent me to you'''" (Exodus 3:13-14).**

**"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).**

**Secure Source #2: knowing God's \_\_\_\_\_**

*"All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of Him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of Him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that He has given me, but raise it up on the last day" (John 6:37-39).*

**Secure Source #3: believing God's \_\_\_\_\_**

**"And this is the testimony that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life" (1 John 5:11-12).**

**APPLICATION:** *Those who are not secure in themselves sabotage their ministry. There are many facets to security, but three come into focus in this section:*

*Spiritual: We are secure in our relationship with the Lord.*

*Emotional: We are secure in ourselves.*

*Relational: We are secure with others.*

*Which of these three is the biggest issue for you, and why?*

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**They KNOW they are SOUND in their FAITH (verses 14-19).**

In this section, Paul moves from using general principles with illustrations (soldier, athlete, farmer) to specific commands designed to encourage continued faithfulness. Christ-like character is demonstrated when leaders *know* they are right. Individuals who know they are right will often laud it over others and can't wait to tell them, but not so Christians. Christians who know they are sound in their faith react to all things with humility.

**HUMBLE WORDS and DEEDS (verses 14-17a)**

This section exhorts Timothy not to be drawn into arguments that are not beneficial to the cause of Christ. What do the Scriptures say Christian leaders are to do, as far as it depends on them, to prevent meaningless arguments among the flock?

**Argument Preventer #1: Focus on the \_\_\_\_\_**

**"And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. <sup>2</sup> For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. <sup>3</sup> And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, <sup>4</sup> and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup> that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God" (1 Corinthians 2:1-5).**

**Argument Preventer #2: Maintain \_\_\_\_\_**

**"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. <sup>2</sup> The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouths of fools pour out folly" (Proverbs 15:1-2).**

**Argument Preventer #3: Be \_\_\_\_\_**

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**“But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless” (Titus 3:9).**

Argument Preventer #4: Don't get \_\_\_\_\_

**“Whoever meddles in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a passing dog by the ears” (Proverbs 26:17).**

**APPLICATION:** Does knowing you are right cause humility and gentleness to spring from your lips, or pride and aggression? If the latter, what is God saying to you? If the former, how would you coach someone who struggles with pride and aggression?

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Which of these four preventers is God's Word to you today?

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What is going to change in your behavior toward another person when you know on the basis of God's Word that you are right?

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**Blanks**

Secure, unchangeable nature, protection, Word, essentials, self-control, clear, involved

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## The Leader KNOWS they are Sanctified Servants (2 Timothy 2:20-26)

***20 Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. 21 Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work. 22 So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. 23 Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. 24 And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 correcting His opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by Him to do His will.***

**V20: 20 Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable.**

**Great house:** Great is from *megas*. It's used of large creatures or people, of things great in size or extent or of a large number, amount or cost of items, things or people. It's meaning here is metaphorical. Paul is speaking of something great in estimation, something of importance – in this instance a house. This house is great. It represents something that is truly significant and genuinely important.

What is this house? John 14:2 speaks of the Father's *house* and the context of chapter 2 implies that this house of significance and genuine importance is none other than the house of God, the church. Now in this house, Paul says there are ...

**Vessels:** The word is from *skeuos* (*skyoo'os*) meaning utensil, implement, or equipment. In verse 20 it is used to describe any vessel or implement used for containing things. In the next verse, verse 21, it is used figurative-

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ly of the human body. In Acts 9:15 Paul is called a vessel or instrument of the Gospel. Human beings are vessels and God's vessels communicate the truth of the Word about Christ. We are by nature called to contain the truth of the Gospel. The question is: what are we containing? Is it honorable or dishonorable?

2 Corinthians 4:7: **"But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us."**

**Question:**

How does this Scripture that teaches us that we, feeble and frail jars of clay, have been entrusted with an eternal treasure God gave us, impact you?

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Turn now, to Romans 9. In this chapter, Paul tackles the mysterious question relating to God's handling of Israel, His sovereign choice of the Gentiles, and His bringing both together in the church of Jesus Christ. Let's read from verses 19-24:

***19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who can resist His will?" 20 But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?" 21 Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honored use and another for dishonorable use? 22 What if God, desiring to show His wrath and to make known His power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 in order to make known the riches of His glory for vessels of mercy, which He has prepared beforehand for glory— 24 even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?***

For our purposes, note the presence of keywords in verse 21: **"Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for**

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***honored use and another for dishonorable use?"***

The same three words occur in 2 Timothy 2:20-21: vessel, honorable and dishonorable. Same words. Same idea, different context.

The implication is this: the truth used in Romans to speak into the situation of God's choosing of Israel, Gentiles, and His building of the church is now taken a step further to include God's dealings within His house, His church. Within His house, as within the world, there are honorable and dishonorable vessels. In the church, there are those who are people of character, people secure in the Lord, but also those who at first glance, are people who lack Christ-like character. They are dishonorable to Him.

**QUESTION:**

How does the reality that the church has honorable and dishonorable vessels impact the church's ministry to unbelievers?

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Based on this truth, how would you answer the objection of church hurt stopping a person from attending or engaging more deeply with a church?

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***V21: Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.***

Underline the phrases, cleanse themselves and set apart as holy. "If anyone cleanses themselves" is written in a way that implies potential action, but the person's decision to do so is a critical factor. In other words, the person has a part to play.

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Cleanse is the word purify. The person is to cleanse themselves from that which is dishonorable. From what, we wonder, is cleansing needed?

Verses 22-23: “**So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. 23 Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels.**”

Verses 22-26 indicate that cleansing is needed from sin – specifically youthful, we might say juvenile, passions – and false teaching, both of which have led to quarrels and division in the Ephesian church. This *cleansing* appears to relate to a person’s decision to flee from binding, life-destroying, and false teaching made possible through selfish juvenile desires.

set apart as holy: This is the term for sanctified, being made holy. It is written in a way (*perfect passive participle*) that has two key thrusts:

1. The person was sanctified in the past, and that state or condition continues. This is the perfect tense.
2. But the word also has what is called the passive voice. This means that they were sanctified by God, not by themselves.

A man went to a bookstore and asked the woman behind the counter where the self-help section was. She replied, “If I told you, that would defeat the whole purpose.” Sanctification requires God – it is not a self-help, do-it-yourself project. They cleanse themselves, BUT God sanctifies them.

#### **How \_\_\_\_\_ works with God’s Sanctifying Work**

Let’s piece together the steps that lead a person to be sanctified by God, as revealed in this text.

STEP 1: A person is a dishonorable vessel (v20-21)

STEP 2: An honorable vessel corrects through the Word, in an attitude of gentleness and loving-kindness (v24-25a)

STEP 3: The dishonorable vessel wants to be cleansed (v21) because God has granted them repentance (v25b)

STEP 4: God sets them apart as holy (v21)

STEP 5: They escape from the devil’s snare (v26) and live as honorable vessels in His great house

The condition of the person at the start is dishonorable and they, wanting to be honorable, cleanse themselves but God does the work of convicting of sin, granting repentance, and “setting them apart as holy.” They are now free from the devil’s snare.

*“The Greek word for “escape” means “to become sober again” or “to come to one’s senses.” The hope is that people who have strayed from the truth will see their mistake and return; or if they never knew it, they will at last see the truth and be drawn to it.”<sup>14</sup>*

**Here we see the two sides of sanctification.** Sanctification is both a divine act and our responsibility. God always takes the initiative in sanctification. He takes the initiative through sending the Spirit to work on the heart of the honorable servant. The Lord also sets the agenda. He works on the honorable servant to reveal a truth in His Word that God wishes to use to cause the dishonorable vessel to repent. Having said that, the dishonorable servant must respond appropriately and continue to respond appropriately.

**This is the way sanctification works.** The NT declares that when a person comes to faith in the Lord Jesus they are immediately justified and sanctified. This is their new position in Christ. The Bible declares that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the repentant sinner. They are then declared right and holy by God. We call this a forensic act of God.

The second aspect of NT exhortation about sanctification urges Christ followers to holiness and sanctification. Reformer, Martin Luther said this:

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<sup>14</sup> Craig Rees, Jim Weeks, “*Virtual Reality*,” p. 80

*“This life, therefore, is not godliness but the process of becoming godly, not health but getting well, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not now what we shall be, but we are on the way. The process is not yet finished, but it is actively going on. This is not the goal but it is the right road. At present, everything does not gleam and sparkle, but everything is being cleansed.”*

Sanctification is both a position in the completed work of Christ and a call to be Christ-like in attitude and actions in daily life.

**QUESTION**

Here is a brief table highlighting the two aspects of the sanctification process:

**Initial Response**

Acts 20:23; 26:18  
 Romans 15:16  
 1 Corinthians 1:2-3  
 2 Thess. 2:13  
 Hebrews 2:11; 10:10,14; 13:12  
 1 Peter 1:1

**Continual Response**

Romans 6:19  
 2 Corinthians 7:1  
 1 Thess. 3:13; 4:3-4,7; 5:23  
 1 Timothy 2:15  
 Hebrews 12:14  
 1 Peter 1:15-16

**Read 2 Timothy 2:21 again. Into which category should 2 Timothy 2:21 be placed?**

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**Is Paul talking about an initial response of setting apart, or is he talking about the need for progressive Christ-likeness mediated through continual responses?**

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**On what do you base your conclusion?**

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**Application**

The Leader who is a Sanctified Servant is someone who ...

... Allows God to be \_\_\_\_\_ ...

How many Ronald Regan fans do we have out there? You may remember the phrase that was banded around in the 80's. When people questioned what President Regan was doing the response came: "Let Regan, be Regan." Paul would say, "Let God be God. Let Him do as He wishes. Who are we to argue with Him?" There are a lot of things we do not and will not understand about God's intervention in the world generally and in a person's life specifically. But a leader who leads as a sanctified servant shouldn't feel the need to explain why God allows certain people to experience what they do. The Lord He is God, and as God He can do all things that are consistent with His nature and purpose – even allowing dishonorable vessels to be found in a "great house." I don't like that, but Scriptures teaches it.

... tackles their sin through their \_\_\_\_\_

Since Romans says that He makes some honorable and others dishonorable I may be tempted to question whether my sinfulness means I am an honorable or dishonorable vessel – whether I will be a vessel of beauty created for good works or one only worthy of being thrown in a trashcan. In those moments where my sinfulness may cause me to question, I have two choices. I can focus on unanswerable questions, or I can be amazed at the fact that the hands of the Lord are upon me, shaping me as He sees fit. If I think that way, I can see the prints where nails scarred those hands, where He loved me so much He died for me on Calvary. Indeed, if He loved me enough to die for me, I can trust Him with my life absolutely, and say to Him, "Do with me as You wish."

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... is ready for \_\_\_\_\_

*Those who are cleansed are literally, "useful to the master." Master is literally despot meaning one who possesses absolute authority. In other words, those who cleanse themselves are useful to God and ready for every good work." Notice the progression. Good works do not make us acceptable to God, but once we are cleansed by Him through Christ good works are the expected result because we are ready for them!*

So a sanctified servant is someone who is ready for good works. Good works don't make us ready to be cleansed. Being cleansed makes us ready for good works.

What are these good works? Living in a Christ-like fashion and winning dishonorable vessels to the Lord! From verse 22 we see the implication of good works starting with our being! **"So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."** In the remainder of the section we see clearly how our being leads to our doing, our lifestyle.

So indwelling sin hampers good works. We may do good deeds. God may be glorified through our good deeds but the blessing is to us, becoming more like Christ, because it is sanctification that makes us ready for them.

... allows God to use them to \_\_\_\_\_

The implication is that going after straying sheep in the house of God is a good work, too. Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend put it like this:

We are all broken in some way, both sinful and sinned against. Because none of us has escaped the results of sin, we suffer spiritual and emotional damage. We won't let others love us. We can't say no. We don't know how to connect with people. We're unable to be firm in our convictions. We need help to be disciplined, to accept our weaknesses, to stand against those who would abuse us. The broken, damaged, immature parts of our character need to be fixed.

As we said, the work of recovery is the work of sanctification. God is redeeming those lost parts of our souls that are injured. He is bringing those parts into the light of His grace and truth. And doing this repair, many wrongly believe, is God himself, by himself, unaided by anyone or anything. All we really need, they insist, is to do what the Bible says. Yet the Bible says over and over again that we should find people to help us return to spiritual and emotional health. The root meaning of the Hebrew word *hazaq*, repair, is to squeeze or bind. Among other things, it means to help strengthen the hands and arms. The picture is of strong hands supporting. In her old age a friend of mine was weak and frail, unable even to hold her fork to eat. At mealtimes I'd sometimes place my hand around hers, guiding the fork to her mouth. This *hazaq* brought us closer together.<sup>15</sup>

### **Blanks**

Cleansing ourselves, God, security, good works, correct others

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<sup>15</sup> Henry Cloud, John Townsend, *Twelve Christian Beliefs that Can Drive You Crazy*, p. 123

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## Live

verb /liv/

lived, past participle; lived, past tense; lives, 3rd person singular present; living, present participle

### 1. Remain alive

- I. False teachers live to please themselves (3:2).
- II. Timothy must live to please God (3:14).

### 2. Be alive at a specified time

- I. Christian leaders live through opposition for as long as the Lord deems fit (3:9).

### 3. Spend one's life in a particular way or under particular circumstances

- I. Christian leaders are living out their lives in difficult times (3:1-8, 12).

### 4. Lead (one's life) in a particular way

- I. Paul was living a life faithfully devoted to Christ despite difficulty (3:10-12).

### 5. Supply oneself with the means of subsistence

- I. Christians live by the power of the Word (3:16-17).

### 6. Survive in someone's mind; be remembered

- I. Only the faithful live on (3:15).

### 7. Have an exciting or fulfilling life

- I. Faithfulness in ministry leads us to live out our faith in unexpected ways and places (3:11-12).

### 8. Make one's home in a particular place or with a particular person

- I. Paul lived for a season in Lystra, Antioch, and Iconium (3:11).

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Although *being* is internal, it is on display externally in how Christian leaders live every day. Being in a godly spiritual condition leads most naturally to living a lifestyle that displays Christ's glory and brings honor to His name. More than just directing people, it is changing them. You can get people to do what you want, but if you haven't changed their hearts, you have not led them to God and shown them His will for their lives.

*Living* in that sense is a verb; it demands actions. The chief action of a Christ-follower is submission to Christ as your leader. Christian leaders need to show others where Christ, the ultimate Leader, is going. Meditating and praying over His Word results in positive life change to equip us to live as God desires, with the competent ability to do the good work He has prepared for us. The Christian leader is trained in righteousness by the Word; he understands it, and uses it to teach and correct those who follow after him gently.

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, and equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

## How the Leader LIVES

### ***They LIVE Consistent to Their Confession (3:1-9)***

***But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. <sup>2</sup> For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup> having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. <sup>6</sup> For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, <sup>7</sup> always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. <sup>8</sup> Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. <sup>9</sup> But they will***

***not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.***

Although *being* is internal, it is on display externally in how Christian leaders live daily. Being in a godly spiritual condition leads most naturally to living a lifestyle that displays Christ's glory and brings honor to His name. More than just directing people, it is changing them. You can get people to do what you want, but if you haven't changed their hearts, you have not led them to God and shown them His will for their lives.

*Living*, in that sense, is a verb; it demands actions. In this chapter, Timothy is encouraged to live true to his confession. This exhortation is made through the power of negative examples by pointing to the dishonorable lifestyle of the false teachers. Below is the dictionary definition of *live*. Note how fully chapter 3 expresses this virtue.

**verb** /liv/

lived, past participle; lived, past tense; lives, 3rd person singular present; living, present participle

#### **1. Remain alive**

False teachers **live** to please themselves (3:2).  
Timothy must **live** to please God (3:14).

#### **2. Be alive at a specified time**

Christian leaders **live** through opposition for as long as the Lord deems fit (3:9).

#### **3. Spend one's life in a particular way or under particular circumstances**

Christian leaders are **living** out their lives in difficult times (3:1-8, 12).

#### **4. Lead (one's life) in a particular way**

Paul was **living** a life faithfully devoted to Christ despite difficulty (3:10-12).

5. *Supply oneself with the means of subsistence*  
Christians **live** by the power of the Word (3:16-17).

6. *Survive in someone's mind; be remembered*  
Only the faithful **live** on (3:15).

7. *Have an exciting or fulfilling life*  
Faithfulness in ministry leads us to **live** out our faith in unexpected ways and places (3:11-12).

8. *Make one's home in a particular place or with a particular person*

Paul **lived** for a season in Lystra, Antioch and Iconium (3:11).

**QUESTIONS:**

***With the definition of live in mind, what was the implication of Paul living in Lystra, Antioch, and Iconium?***

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***What does it mean for you to live here? What is your reaction to such an implication?***

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***But understand this ...:*** This phrase expresses the idea of perceived knowledge.

**PRINCIPLE:** According to the Bible, \_\_\_\_\_ creates thoughts; thoughts produce \_\_\_\_\_; actions form \_\_\_\_\_ and habits form our destiny.

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***<sup>2</sup> For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup> having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.***

**Scriptural axiom:** \_\_\_\_\_ always precede actions.

**APPLICATION: Scriptural Thoughts About Living True to Our Confession**

How do we put this truth into practice? For the Bible's words of truth to become more than just words, we've got to digest them slowly over prolonged periods of time, so that we form Christ-like habits.

**HABIT #1:** We'll consistently discipline our thoughts to be \_\_\_\_\_, because actions begin with thoughts:

***For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, <sup>22</sup> coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. <sup>23</sup> All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person (Mark 7:21-23).***

**HABIT #2:** We'll consistently think first, because that will help us speak and act \_\_\_\_\_:

*Proverbs 15:28: The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things (Proverbs 15:28).*

**HABIT #3:** We'll consistently allow the Holy Spirit to change our thought \_\_\_\_\_:

***Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal***

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**of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect (Romans 12:2).**

**HABIT #4: We'll consistently think about good things, so our words and actions will be \_\_\_\_\_:**

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*Philippians 4:8: **Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things (Philippians 4:8).***

**REFLECTION:**

Which of these four habits is the crucial one for you right now? Why? What incidents have led you to this point?

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In the space below, write a prayer to the Lord, asking Him to help you think biblically in order to live biblically.

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**... in the last days there will come times of difficulty:** *Even though honorable servants can be vessels in the Lord's hands to lead dishonorable vessels to repentance, Timothy is served due notice that in the last days things will be difficult.*

**Truth:** Opposition to the gospel is not a \_\_\_\_\_ obstacle; it is a permanent \_\_\_\_\_ of the age because people will not submit to the truth.

**Avoid such people:** *Timothy is to willfully and continually avoid this kind of person. Avoidance refers to false teachers.*

**Creep into households and capture weak women weighed down with sins:** Why women?

**LESSON:** *The issue is \_\_\_\_\_, not \_\_\_\_\_.*

**APPLICATION: Four Practices for Living True to Our Confession**

How do we allow the Spirit to work in us so that we live true to our confession rather than becoming people weighed down with sin? Here are four simple practices that we'd encourage you to make time for:

**PRACTICE #1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRACTICE #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRACTICE #3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRACTICE #4:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Blanks:**

Knowledge, actions, habits, thoughts, pure, wisely, patterns, positive, temporary, feature, culture, nature, reflect, reassess, reconcile, reunite

## The Caution for a Christian Leader

**They LIVE Constant in their Devotion to their God and the Scriptures (3:10-17)**

**<sup>10</sup> You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, <sup>11</sup> my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. <sup>12</sup> Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, <sup>13</sup> while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. <sup>14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it <sup>15</sup> and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.**

This section reads like a broad overview of Timothy's life in ministry. Paul reminds him what he has done in the past – “you have followed ...” – then in verse 14, Paul exhorts a continuation with, “But as for you, continue in ...” Verses 10 through 13 describe Timothy's past loyalty to Paul, and verses 14 through 17 urge him to remain loyal in the future. Timothy's character and conduct were in dramatic contrast to the lives of the false teachers. Timothy had been faithful in following the example and commands of Paul in ministry and life. Timothy had witnessed God's faithful provision and sometimes miraculous delivery from persecution. This encouraged him to devote himself to His God and the Scriptures. Christian leaders are devoted to Christ.

## DEVOTED CHRIST-FOLLOWER

**QUESTION: What does it mean to be a devoted Christ-follower?**

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**DEFINITION:** Devotion is not an action but an \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ that leads a person to act devoutly.

Exodus 35:20-21: **“Then all the congregation of the people of Israel departed from the presence of Moses. 21 And they came, everyone whose heart stirred him, and everyone whose spirit moved him, and brought the Lord's contribution to be used for the tent of meeting, and for all its service, and for the holy garments.”**

**PRINCIPLE:** the desire to do what the Lord wanted them to do was a special kind of action.

**QUESTION: “How can I know what God wants?”**

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**First, I can know what God wants because I \_\_\_\_\_ (CONTACT)**

Exodus 33:12-13: **“Moses said to the Lord, “See, you say to me, ‘Bring up this people,’ but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.’ 13 Now therefore, if I have found favor in your sight, please show me now your ways, that I may know you in order to find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.”**

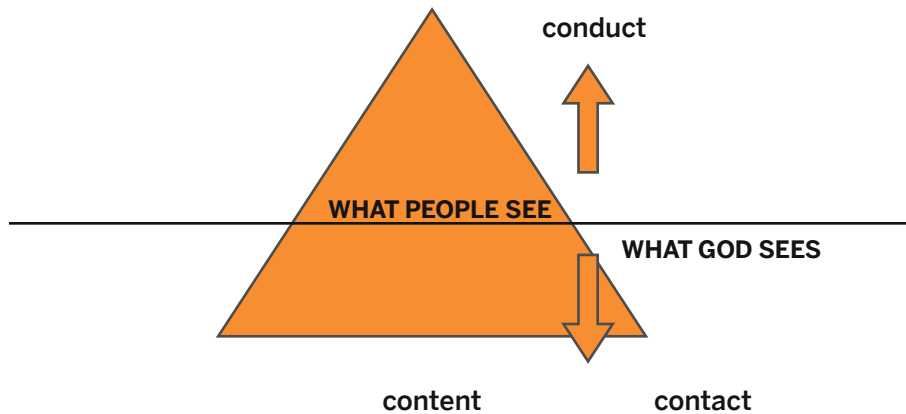
**PRINCIPLE:** friendship with God, a true privilege for Moses, was out of reach for others.

John 15:15-16a: **“No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you ...”**

**Second, I can know what God wants because I \_\_\_\_\_**  
**(CONTENT)**

2 Timothy 3:16-17: **“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.”**

The truth about devotion can be summed up in this simple diagram.



**PRINCIPLE:** *I AM devoted not I DO devotion*

*Knowledge leads to thoughts, thoughts lead to actions, actions lead to habits and habits determine a destiny.*

In 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:10-17, we discover two principal expressions of the devoted life.

**EXPRESSION #1: \_\_\_\_\_ (v10-11)**

**You, however, have followed:** The Greek word translated as “have followed” has a rich NT pedigree.

**QUESTIONS:**

Biblical discipleship does not exist in a relational vacuum. Behind every leader there are followers. Paul’s aim was not to be get Timothy to copy him but specifically the Christ in Paul who was being lived out through Paul. Timothy was to be “covered in the dust of his rabbi ...” Paul was to reproduce Christ’s life in him to Timothy. In whose dust are you covered? Who are you following, or who have you followed after?

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Would they say your follow-ship has been faithful, keeping to their teaching and leadership?

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**EXPRESSION #2: \_\_\_\_\_ (v12-15)**

**12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted ...**

**HEART-SHAPING**

Verses 14-15: **But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.**

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**QUESTION:** Answer the following question: what do verses 14-15 suggest shaped Timothy's heart to make his endurance a realistic possibility?

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2 Timothy 1:5: ***"I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well."***

**Summary**

How is the heart-shaped to endure? The heart is shaped through:

**1. Consistent exposure to the power of God in the Scriptures (3:16-17)**

**2. A commitment to follow in the footsteps and learn from the Christ-followers God has placed in our lives (v15)**

**3. The passing of time ... (1:5; 3:15)**

**Blanks:**

Attitude, heart, know Him, Scripture, following, enduring



## Reproduce

verb /,rɛprə'd(y)oʊs/

reproduced, past participle; reproduced, past tense; reproduces, 3rd-person singular present; reproducing, present participle

### 1. Produce again

I. Timothy must reproduce the gospel in good days and bad (4:2).

### 2. Produce a copy or representation of

I. Timothy was to reproduce not only Paul's message but also his suffering if necessary (4:5).

### 3. Create something very similar to (something else), esp. in a different medium or context

I. Timothy would have to reproduce sound doctrine in places where dif-

# VIRTUE

# #4:

# REPRODUCE

ferent results are to be expected (4:3-4).

#### 4. Produce offspring

I. Timothy is called to do the work of an evangelist so that people can be born again and Christ reproduced in them through the Spirit (4:5).

#### 5. Be copied with a specified degree of success

Paul was dedicated to ensure that the whole gospel and nothing but the gospel was reproduced (4:1).

Paul is writing within weeks or perhaps days of his martyrdom; church tradition holds that he was beheaded on the Ostian Way outside Rome. It is clear from verses 6-8 that he does not expect to live much longer. These final words are packed with great solemnity. “Truly, as he has written here, Paul has fought the good fight, finished the course and kept the faith (verse 7). Now he awaits the crown of righteousness that God has laid up for him in heaven (verse 8).

Verse 1 sets the tone: “I charge you.” Paul knows what every good leader knows: There is no success without a successor. His focus in this chapter is on making a heartfelt appeal to his young protégé to persevere. Paul wants to ensure that the legacy of Christ outlives him. To that end, and for that purpose, Paul writes to see the Christ in Him reproduced in Timothy and through Timothy to others.

The Christian leader is always duplicating himself. Paul entreats Timothy to be influential and ambitious for Christ, and cause others to listen and respond to the call of the gospel (verse 2). In this chapter, Paul will assume the responsibility for ensuring that Timothy is given every opportunity to grow in the Lord after Paul’s departure from this world. In the same way that Paul was not concerned for his own position when delegating leadership to Timothy, Timothy must also focus on reproducing in others the Christ in him. If Timothy commits to that, the ministry can grow exponentially.

## Whom The Leader Invests In (4:1-22)

In chapter 2 verse 2 Paul said: **“What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”**

**The principle:** \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_.

We must *multiply* as Christians because addition won’t keep up with the population growth. According to Paul, discipleship is multiplying ourselves in the lives of others. Paul follows the example of His Savior, Jesus, who lived with His disciples and invested His life in them. Here’s what Paul told the Christians in Thessalonica.

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8: **“But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. 8 So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.”**

In both Jesus’s and Paul’s time, there were two models of discipleship: the Greek model and the Hebrew model. **The Greek model** was **teaching**—we think of Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Alexander the Great. It was **enlightenment, information** that pleased the mind. But Jesus disciplined according to **the Hebrew model: on-the-job training**. Jesus took His twelve disciples with him, and they experienced things together. Whichever model you pursue, disciple-making involves a developmental relationship where a mature Christian invests and mentors a willing apprentice so that he or she not only matures but also becomes a multiplying Christian.

#### Questions:

Consider the following questions:

***1. What do you possess, spiritually, that you can pass on?***

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**II. Do you know of any people who could benefit from your spiritual maturity?**

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**III. Although you are not perfect, what stops you from committing to multiplying at least one spiritual discipline or quality in someone else?**

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**The Leader REPRODUCES their Charge and Comfort in Others (4:1-8)**

***I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: <sup>2</sup> preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. <sup>3</sup> For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, <sup>4</sup> and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. <sup>5</sup> As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. <sup>6</sup> For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing.***

Verse 1 sets the tone: ***“I charge you.”***

Paul knows what every good leader knows: there is no success without a successor. There are two great charges in the Bible, made by great men who left well-qualified successors in their stead. The first was issued by King David on his deathbed as he gave his throne and the nation of Israel to his son, Solomon, in 1 Kings 2.

1 Kings 2: ***“Now the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying: <sup>2</sup> “I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. <sup>3</sup> And keep the charge of the LORD your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn; <sup>4</sup> that the LORD may fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,’ He said, ‘you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel!’” (bold ours, NKJV)***

Note the structure:

An Exhortation: “Be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man” (v2)

An Appeal: “Walk in His ways, keep His statutes ...” (v3)

A Promise from God: “That you may prosper in all that you do” v4)

Here in 2 Timothy 4: 1-8, we find a similar baton-passing:

An Exhortation: “I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom” (v1)

An Appeal: “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (v2)

A Promise from God: “Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing” (v8).

The Greek word translated here as “I charge you,” has a legal connotation that means, “I testify under oath,” as in a court of law. Although it is used here for Paul’s delegated authority to Timothy, it is applicable in a secondary sense to every Christian leader. We are also being charged by the Lord when we read this.

A dictionary definition of reproduction reveals five aspects to it, all of which are visible in the opening 8 verses of this chapter.

**ASPECT #1: To reproduce is to PRODUCE \_\_\_\_\_**

*French cultural sociologist Jean Baudrillard said, “The very definition of the real becomes: that of which it is possible to give an equivalent reproduction.”*

Timothy must reproduce the gospel in good days and bad. Look at verse 2: “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.”

Producing again is something that we are familiar with at Central. We have multiple services, at multiple times, in multiple locations (Big House and 909 – and soon to be the chapel). The message stays the same. We reproduce the content again and again. We also reproduce ourselves in other locations through our Family of Churches.

“The wise pastor of a rapid-growth church follows the instituting of additional worship services with an expanded small-group ministry. Churches that generate their worship attendance growth through the continued creation of new multiple worship services, without also creating additional small groups (i.e., Sunday school classes and/or home cell groups), are in danger of building the empty cathedrals of the next generation. The major issue in continued growth is not merely one of small churches versus large churches. The issue is the ability

of a congregation, any size congregation, to be able to reproduce itself through new groups, additional worship services, and new mission churches. The issue also leads church leaders beyond merely having small groups to developing small groups designed for, and capable of, multiplication.”<sup>16</sup>

The first aspect of reproduction is to reproduce again. Note how Timothy must reproduce the gospel in good days and bad.

2 Timothy 4:2: **“preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.”**

**ASPECT #2: To reproduce is to PRODUCE A \_\_\_\_\_ or representation of another’s life**

2 Timothy 4:5: **“As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”**

Sober-mindedness, perseverance in suffering, and evangelistic zeal are qualities observed in Paul. Timothy was to reproduce these qualities. To reproduce is to produce a copy or representation of key qualities in another person’s life. Young children do this when they copy their parent’s behavior.

**ASPECT #3: To reproduce is to \_\_\_\_\_ SOMETHING very SIMILAR (to something else) especially in a different context**

Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein once said, *“It is so characteristic, that just when the mechanics of reproduction are so vastly improved, there are fewer and fewer people who know how the music should be played.”*

In his final letter, Paul challenged Timothy to reproduce what he had seen and heard in different contexts. He would have to reproduce the sound doctrine he had heard from Paul in different places where different results are

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<sup>16</sup> John Vaughan, *Megachurches and America’s Cities*, p. 58

to be expected (4:3-4). Let's read verses 3-4:

**“For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.”**

Even though Timothy would reproduce a message of the same content, albeit in his own unique style, successful reproduction does not mean that the response will always be the same. The results would and could differ in different contexts.

We see this in Acts 17: the story of Paul at Mars Hill in Athens. Here, Paul found himself in a less favorable environment, adapted his communication style, and had less success than his sermons at other places in Acts. Nonetheless, he did reproduce something similar in a different context. So, reproducing the Gospel message is not about style and form but content consistency. Sometimes there needs to be an adaptation depending on the audience or other environmental factors. According to verses 3 and 4, Timothy will find himself on his own.

Sometimes this will be your experience too. What works in one place will not work in another. 2 Timothy 4:3-4: **“For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.”**

**ASPECT #4: To reproduce is to PRODUCE \_\_\_\_\_**

The Reformation Reformer, Martin Luther, **“The reproduction of mankind is a great marvel and mystery. Had God consulted me in the matter, I should have advised him to continue the generation of the species by fashioning them out of clay.”**

In the Garden of Eden God said, “Go forth and multiply.” On the Mount of Ascension Jesus said, “Go forth and make disciples.” Both Old and New Testaments contain charges to God’s people concerning reproduction. The focus of the Old is overwhelmingly biological and national and the focus of the New is spiritual and international.

In 2 Timothy Paul echoes that charge to Timothy.

Look at verse 5 again: **“As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”**

**QUESTION:** Do the work of an evangelist. What does this mean to you?

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**ASPECT #5: To reproduce is to be \_\_\_\_\_ with a specified degree of success**

Paul was dedicated to ensuring that the whole gospel, and nothing but the gospel, was reproduced.

***I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word.”***

Success for Paul was determined not by the number of people who responded but by the quality of the message to which they responded. Timothy is charged with preaching the truth, not preaching for the size of the response. Success is measured by the Lord in terms of faithfulness to the truth and the wisdom of the presentation and not by the numbers who respond.

**Conclusion**

At Central, we desire to pour our lives into others. We are so committed to this that we practice it organizationally as we pour ourselves into our pastors leading other churches. This is not our IDEA but the Lord’s IDEA. The goal is reproduction. Note the Scriptural IDEA of spiritual reproduction (John Maxwell):

I \_\_\_\_\_ in a real-life context.

D \_\_\_\_\_ in a real-life context. Jesus not only taught people in parables, but He was also always showing them. He was visualizing. He was incarnating, fleshing out the truth before them.

E \_\_\_\_\_ in a real-life context. It's where Jesus would take the disciples into these situations and they would try it.

A \_\_\_\_\_ or assessment in a real-life context. After they tried it, and after they experimented, they came back and they talked about it.

The real-life context for us is engaging with other people. Doing life with other people--knowing and being known. This was the original IDEA. We must return to the original idea. As we invest in people, we must be committed to three things:

1. A Person
2. A Process
3. A Purpose

God will help you find number 1. If you have made Jesus Lord and Savior, you have number 3. Your purpose is the Great Commission. Number 2, the process, is our job as an organized body of believers.

### **Blanks**

*Multiplication, reproduction, again, copy, create, offspring, copied, instruction, demonstration, exposure, accountability.*

**9 Do your best to come to me soon. 10 For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. 11 Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry. 12 Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. 13 When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments. 14 Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will repay him according to His deeds. 15 Beware of him yourself, for he strongly opposed our message. 16 At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them! 17 But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. 18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into His heavenly kingdom. To Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen. 19 Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. 20 Erastus remained at Corinth, and I left Trophimus, who was ill, at Miletus. 21 Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus sends greetings to you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers. 22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.**

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In these verses, 17 people are specifically mentioned as having interacted with Paul in one way or another:

Demas, Crescens, Titus, Luke, Mark, Tychicus, Carpus, Alexander, Prisca, Aquila, Onesiphorus, Erastus, Trophimus, Eubulus, Prudens, Linus and Claudia ...

Not all of these are positive relationships, the Demas and Alexander relationships certainly aren't. These last words of Paul remind us that at the end of one's life a person will not remember the successful or unsuccessful business deals but successful or unsuccessful relationships. People matter.

In this text, we discover six elements critical to living faithfully and dying relationally fulfilled:

**ELEMENT #1: Successful Relationships are built on a Clear \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_**

Healthy relationships function best when there's understanding.

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**REPRODUCE  
TENDER CARE**

**(4:1-22)**

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**Verse 9:** Do your best to come to me soon

**Verse 21:** Do your best to come before winter

The phrase “Do your best” is one word in the Greek: *spoudason*, meaning “Make Every Effort” or “Do your diligence.” It’s repeated in verse 21, and there it is more specific because Paul asks Timothy to ensure he travels before winter (see also 2:15). Shipping stopped in the winter so no one would be able to come to him after the seasonal storms began (Tits 3:21).

Paul was lonely, close to the end of his life, and wanted Timothy with him. It’s hard to believe that Timothy would not have taken the request seriously, but nonetheless I like the way Paul puts this: “Do your best.”

*In his First Letter to Timothy, Paul quickly issued a command concerning Timothy’s movements: “As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain in Ephesus” (1:3). The word urge is the word paraklesa meaning “to implore, call for, invoke.” In his first letter, Paul felt he could urge Timothy to move to or not move from a certain place. In his second letter, he phrases it more carefully: “do your best.” In other words, “I know you have challenges to overcome with this, but here’s what I’d like you to do.”*

**QUESTION:** Why do you think Paul was not as authoritative with his last words?

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**Friendship is not Lordship**

I can’t help but conclude that the difference between the two instructions is Paul’s realization that all things, including his desires, fall under the priority of the Gospel. Timothy should do his best, but it wasn’t a command from the Lord because it related to friendship, not Lordship.

In 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy, the issue was about Lordship and Timothy’s role as a bond-servant of Christ. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy, the issue is friendship and Timothy’s role

as a mentee of Paul. One of the difficult aspects of friendships is trying to balance Lordship – what God is calling us to do – with friendship – what our friends want us to do. There are only 24 hours in a day, and when the call of Christ clashes with the demands of friendship, a leader must always put his desires on the back burner.

All successful friendships function well because we understand where the priorities lie. Ultimately, the priority is the Gospel and, like Paul, when asking a friend or mentee to do something outside of their commitment to the Gospel, we need to recognize that we have the right to ask the question, but we have no right to enforce a demand. They serve Christ, not us.

**QUESTIONS:**

Do you know your close friends’ priorities and the call of Christ on their life? How do you get to know those priorities?

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Are your requests of your friends ever perceived as demands more than appeals?

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If your answer to these questions is no, then ongoing close relationships demand that you know your friend’s priorities and limitations.

**ELEMENT #2: Successful Relationships are built on our willingness to**

Paul demonstrates vulnerability in his relationship with Timothy. In verses 10 and 16, he is willing to express emotional fragility.

**Verse 10:** For Demas ... has deserted me.

**Verse 16:** At my first defense no one came to stand by me

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As we'll see later, this isn't an accusation so much as a confession of pain. It's an expression of vulnerability. When it comes to healthy relationships, trust is built on vulnerability. Teams that truly trust are those who learn to be comfortable being open, even exposed, to one another around their failures, weakness, and fears. Patrick Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*: "Vulnerability-based trust is predicated on the simple ... idea that people who aren't afraid to admit the truth about themselves are not going to engage in the kind of political behavior that wastes everyone's time and energy."

Paul is not one of these leaders who live with the idea that he must preserve himself. No, Paul willingly puts himself at risk for the Gospel. He openly shares that with Timothy while not being afraid to share his pain. Leaders who reproduce well are those who can express vulnerability within the context of their commitment to Christ and their confidence in Him. Vulnerability isn't about manipulation so much as transparency. For this transparency to be godly, it must be built on the third element.

**ELEMENT #3: Successful Relationships are built on \_\_\_\_\_ in**

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Despite the obstacles Paul faced, he still expressed his trust in God. Successful reproducing relationships are those where one party's confidence in God rubs off on the other.

**Verse 16: May it not be charged against them!**

Not "May it be charged against them," but may it not. Paul's confidence was in God, and with Timothy, He demonstrated a willingness to let go and allow God to deal with people.

Confidence in God to deal with the errors in another person is important for us not to get involved in he said, she said situations. I call these triangular conversations.

**Verse 17: "But the Lord stood by me..."**

**Verse 18: "The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed."**

In his last days, the apostle Paul demonstrated an incredible confidence in God that went far deeper than the pain of abandonment and the scourge of loneliness. He believed God. One of the hardest, yet vital, decisions we can make in a relational crisis is to trust God. M. Holmes Hartshorne puts the importance of trusting God in all things like this:

"Faith without doubt is dead; but doubt without faith is death. Doubt that is not grounded in an ultimate confidence in the Cross of Christ is doomed to skepticism, cynicism and despair, for it cannot see that in the loss of our certainties there is given to us the greater certainty of God's redemptive presence. It cannot see that through doubt we are delivered from the great lie that we are gods and our truths are eternal truth and our standards timelessly valid. But where doubt is rooted in faith, it becomes the source of honesty, humility and joy."<sup>17</sup>

You may doubt people BUT never doubt God's controlling power even when people fail you.

**ELEMENT #4: Successful Relationships are built on \_\_\_\_\_**

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Throughout the letter, Paul encouraged Timothy to confront issues. We get the impression that confrontation was not one of Timothy's strong points.

**Verse 14: Alexander did me great harm ...**

**Verse 15: Beware of him yourself.**

Many of us can identify with the woman who anointed Jesus' feet, but a less appealing prospect is to identify with Simon the Pharisee: Simon the judgmental, Simon the arrogant, Simon who couldn't even show the common courtesy of a welcoming kiss, but who still believed himself several cuts

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<sup>17</sup> M. Holmes Hartshorne, *Faith Without Doubt Is Dead, Religion and life* (April 1956), p. 69-70.

above the repentant woman.

The problem is, if we are like Simon, we are not apt to know it, for Simon was blind to his need for forgiveness. Jesus did not tell the parable of the two debtors for the woman's benefit, but for Simon's. When a person suffers from sin-hiding blindness, it often takes direct confrontation or a particularly apropos example to force insight.

If we don't see any of Simon in our own character, it may be because he doesn't lurk there...but it could be because Simons always have trouble seeing themselves as they are. Jesus confronted Simon with the parable to make him see. And God may use other passages of His Word in the hands of a friend or an enemy to confront us. When we are confronted, we are likely to discover we possess elements of both the woman and Simon, and both need much forgiveness.

**QUESTION:** Are you in a relationship where the confrontation of sin and godly repentance and forgiveness are typical expressions? If not, your relationship will not be as meaningful and authentic as it could and should be.

**ELEMENT #5: Successful Relationships are built on \_\_\_\_\_**

**Verse 11: Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.**

What affirmation for that young man! And what a transforming change. At the heart of successful relationships lie the ability to affirm a person even after a painful past. As Christians, we must remember that it is not where a person is now, or even the pain they cause us now, that counts. No, it is where they will end up. We have to allow God the room to work a change in a person's heart, and we must be able to affirm that person and welcome them when such a change occurs.

Calvin Miller tells the story of a first grader in a somewhat counter-cultural community who came a few days late for the beginning of school. His teacher was pleased that his parents had filled out all the appropriate forms, including putting his name on a name tag around his neck. Still, though the

teacher was used to names like Sea Foam, Precious Promise, and Peek-a-Boo, she was startled by the name on this small boy's tag, Fruitstand. She went with the flow, though; throughout the day it was, "Fruitstand, would you like to color a picture? Fruitstand, it is time for recess."

When it was time to put the children on the buses that afternoon, she said, "Now, don't you worry, Fruitstand, the bus driver will know where to drop you off because all of the parents write where their child should get off on the back of the name tag. Turning over Fruitstand's name tag, she found the word Anthony."

At Christmas, we remember that one side of Jesus' name tag reads Prince of Egypt; the other, Emmanuel, God is with us. One side of John Mark's name tag read *fearful*, much like Demas, but on the other side there *useful*. God is in the habit of changing people, and we must allow those who once hurt us an opportunity to prove their usefulness to Christ and the ministry.

**ELEMENT #6: Successful Relationships are built on \_\_\_\_\_**

- Look at the people that Paul has released from Himself:
- Crescens is in Galatia (v10)
- Tychicus is in Ephesus (v12)
- Carpus is in Troas (v13)
- Erastus in in Corinth (v20)
- Trophimus is in Miletus (v20)

All successful relationships, whether personal, work, or ministry, function best when there is a commitment to let go and let God. Paul knew that the greatest priority was the kingdom and not his own personal needs.

Churches will do well to remember this when the Lord calls a pastor or member of staff on to another fellowship. Successful relationships are all about letting people go where God calls them to be.

## Application

Which of these essential elements is your strongest? Use this space to thank the Lord for this.

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Which of these essential elements is your weakest? Use this space to ask the Lord to help you develop this element so that it reaches its fullest expression in your life.

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## Blanks

Understanding of Priorities, Express Vulnerability, Confidence in God, Confronting Wrong, Affirmation, Letting Go

## Conclusion

To say a good and final farewell is demanding and draining, but for those left behind, it is a priceless and greatly appreciated last act. Too many people are unwilling to deal with their situation when facing death. Others are taken unexpectedly, with no chance to say goodbye. They lose any chance to beg forgiveness, declare love, reveal secrets, or just say, "I will miss you until I see you in His Kingdom."

For some of you reading this, the winter of your life approaches. As it does, consider your need to have friends "come," if only by telephone or email. Your winter may arrive at a young or older age, but it is coming. Will you meet it confidently like Paul did, trusting the Lord Jesus Christ to deliver you into eternity safely?

Here is one vivid imagining of Paul's final day, by A.T. Robertson:

We may picture the event in a possible manner. One day in late spring or early June the executioners came to Paul's dungeon and led him out of the city. One is reminded of Jesus as he bore His cross along His Via Dolorosa. Paul, as a condemned criminal, would be the victim of the rabble's sport. He would have no defender. We do not know if Luke was with Paul to the very last. We may at least hope so. If he could, he would surely walk along as near Paul as would be allowed. But no band of Christians followed with him now. He was going out of Rome on his way to the true Eternal City. He knew Rome well, but his eyes were fixed on other things. Outside the city the busy, merry life of the time went on. The crowds flowed into town. Some were going out. Paul was only a criminal going to be beheaded. Few, if any, of the crowds about would know or care anything about him. At a good place on the road some miles out the executioners stopped. The block was laid down. Paul laid his head upon it. The sword (or axe) was raised. The head of the greatest preacher of the ages rolled upon the ground. Tradition says that a Roman 'matron named Lucina buried the body of St. Paul on her own land, beside the Ostian Road.' Be that as it may, no Christian can come to Rome, especially by the Ostian Road, without tender thoughts of Paul, the matchless servant of Jesus.<sup>18</sup>

What a picture!

This one who knows Christ personally, was known by Timothy closely, lived for Christ so publicly, and was an inspiring example to his co-workers, was executed alone! No doubt Timothy would mourn the loss of his spiritual father and mentor for the rest of his life. That much is sure. Sure, too, is that Paul's selfless example inspired Timothy to be the kind of leader, preacher, teacher, pastor, and passionate Christ follower that Paul knew he would one day be. Why? Timothy committed to know the truth, be the truth, live the truth, and reproduce that truth in others.

That, simply put, is Christian leadership.

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<sup>18</sup> A.T. Robertson, *Epochs in the Life of Paul, Word Pictures in the New Testament*, pg. 316-317

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