

“A Disciple Named Timothy”

Sermon Notes

➤ **Our church’s future is incredibly bright, and it doesn’t require us to get fancy - it just requires us to be faithful**

**3 fundamentals for our mission into the days ahead...*

1. Protect the leadership pipeline (vv. 1-3a; 2 Timothy 1:5; 2 Timothy 3:14-15)

2. Promote family unity (vv.3b-4; Ephesians 4:1-6)

3. Prioritize gospel growth (v.5)

Next Week: Acts 16:6-10

MEFC Community Group Study Guide

For the week of April 28th - May 4th

Getting Started

1. In the pages of the New Testament, Paul and Timothy are a classic example of a personal discipling relationship. In fact, we have two whole epistles (1st and 2nd Timothy) that bear witness to the remarkable connection created by the Lord between these two men. Have you ever experienced such a relationship in your Christian life? Have you ever been a mentor to another believer (i.e. have you been a “Paul”)? Have you ever been mentored by another believer (i.e. have you been a “Timothy”)? If so, please share with the group.

Digging Deeper

2. If your answer to the question above was “no”, let’s get creative about how we might begin to address that. Can you think of a Christian whose walk with the Lord you admire that you would be interested in being responsible *to*? Can you think of a Christian who is on the pathway with Jesus, perhaps a few steps behind you, that you might begin to come alongside (i.e. someone you might become responsible *for*)? The curriculum is simple: *head, heart, hands, home*. That is...seek to grow together in your Christian *convictions*, your Christian *character*, your Christian ministry *competencies*, and the depth of your Christian *community* side-by-side one another. Can you think of some activities that might facilitate those four goals? If someone comes to your mind (either as your “Paul” or your “Timothy”), how might you take the first step toward such a relationship?

Open Your Bible to Acts 16:1...

3. Luke tells us in verse 1 that when Paul came to the communities of Derbe and Lystra that: “A disciple was there named Timothy...”. This language presupposes that Timothy was already a convert to Christ. How did he become a believer? Although Acts 16:1 gestures toward the answer, 2 Timothy 1:5 and 3:14-15 make it abundantly clear. Under the sovereign hand of God, who led Timothy to the Lord? We live in a culture that increasingly tends to minimize the role of the family in the formation of young people - especially the role of a mother in the home. How do Paul’s words in these texts speak in direct opposition to that tendency to underestimate and even belittle the value and the power of parental influence? What sort of encouragement ought those who are parents in our church take as a result?

4. Notice at the same time (in verse 1) Luke’s careful observation regarding the spiritual dynamics at work in the home in which Timothy was reared. He is described as: “...the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, *but his father was a Greek.*” What does the word “but” in that sentence tell us about the spiritual condition of Timothy’s dad? What must it have been like for Timothy to read passages like 1 Timothy 1:2, 18; 3:14-15; 4:12; 5:23; 2 Timothy 1:2, 13; 2:1-2; 3:10-11? If you do not have parents who are believers, how does this encourage you about God’s designs for relationships in the church?

5. Moreover, we have no evidence that the Apostle Paul was ever married or had any biological or legal children of his own. Yet he not only speaks personally to Timothy with those words above, but also writes publicly of Timothy with descriptions like the one in Philippians 2:19-24. If you have no biological or legal children of your own at the moment, how does Paul’s approach to the identity of his relationship Timothy reassure you about your identity in the church as well as your role in the Great Commission?

6. 2 Timothy 2:1-2 is regarded as one of the seminal texts in the Bible about the nature and agenda of personal discipling relationships in the church - and for good reason. Though most of us stampede straight for verse 2, let's take some time to linger in verse 1. Noting once again the familial language of verse 1 ("my child"), what does Paul's vocabulary tell us about the kind of connection that a personal discipling relationship in the church is designed to forge between two people? Even more significantly, what specific instruction does Paul give to Timothy in verse 1? Doesn't that sound glorious? What does it mean to "be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus?" Take some time to discuss it as a group.

7. So, it's in the power of verse 1 that Paul issues this remarkable instruction to Timothy in verse 2. Makes sense, doesn't it (i.e. enjoy the gospel yourself...then...seek to entrust the gospel to others)? What specifically does Paul want Timothy to entrust to others according to verse 2 (consider what he's already entrusted to him in 1 Timothy 1:18-20; 4:11, 13-16; 6:20; 2 Timothy 1:14; 2:15; 4:1-5)? Using two key descriptors, Paul also points toward the sort of men to whom Timothy ought to entrust this treasure (in verse 2). Why is this important?

8. Think back over the sermon outline from this past Sunday...

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Which truth(s) in particular do you intend to lean into as we continue to pursue our mission to be and make disciples of Jesus? Revisiting question #2, what practical step might you take toward a personal discipling relationship as a Paul, a Timothy, or both?