

PRAYING
FIRST
TIMOTHY
VERSE BY
VERSE

BY CHAD GRAVES

PRAYING THROUGH SCRIPTURE:

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1 TIMOTHY**

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OUR APPROACH TO PRAYING SCRIPTURE

1. Read the verse and emphasize different words or phrases in the text.
2. Consider key phrases as prayers and turn them into personal prayers.
3. Let your mind be provoked by the text and the Spirit prompt you.
4. Pray about what comes to mind and share within a group to benefit from one another's insight.
5. Find a theme or common thread in the passage you've read.
6. Search the text for how it speaks to your current situation and hear from the Lord.
7. Remember: Prayer is primarily about being in the presence of God.

This method can be further understood by reading Donald Whitney's book *Praying Scripture*. It is a helpful guide and explanation of why scripture is an affective tool in teaching us what to pray.

Chad Graves. D.Th
PO Box 2122 | Southside Ar, 72503
www.CompassSouth.org chadlangraves@gmail.com

HOW TO START:

PRAY ABOUT PRAYING

**7 PASSAGES TO PREPARE
IN PRAYER WITH**

My friend Bill Elliff told me that he prays about the prayer meetings that their church has. They have been meeting every Wednesday morning for 26 years for 2 hours for prayer together. When he told that to me, I realized I had spent most of my ministry personally praying and leading small prayers as a part of our Sunday service. So, we started meeting every week to pray early on Thursday mornings and I followed his example and started spending at least an hour a week praying about our prayer meetings. What guides our prayers about prayer?

7 PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE

"Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have given me relief when I was in distress. Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!" Psalm 4:1

1. Spend some time asking God to answer prayers. Ask God for the grace of a vibrant prayer life that increases the faith of all those who pray together.

"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words." Romans 8:26

2. Spend some time asking God to help you know what to pray. Groan in stillness and wait for the Spirit patiently.

"Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:5-7

3. Ask for God's presence in the room when the people come to pray and for His peace to take away anxiety.

"Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving." -Colossians 4:2

4. Make a list of those who come and pray for them by name and thank God for them. Text them and let them know you have prayed for them. Ask them is there anything specific you can pray for them.

"In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence." Hebrews 5:7

5. Get your heart right through prayer. Prepare yourself through prayer for the prayer meeting. Reverence yourself before the Lord. Ask for him to break your heart about the things that break his heart.

"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working." James 5:16

6. Clear your own conscience by spending time asking God to bring anything to your attention that you need to deal with.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes." Psalms 19:7-8

7. Prepare for the prayer meeting by meditating on and studying the passage that will be used to guide the prayer meeting. Ask God to illuminate the text.

We want for this time to be impactful. We want God to move and build up those who attend. We want to build a culture of prayer and discipleship. We want to see people shift from shallowness to deep spiritual convictions. We want to know and pray for those who are in our care. We want to fan into flame the gift of God in them.

PRAY FOR PEOPLE TO PRAY WITH

Consider going through the next 40 sessions of prayer together with other believers. Whether it is done one day after another or as a weekly prayer time with friends, take a moment and pray about praying. 1 Timothy is line after line of things that will help mature a christian's faith. Life is terribly busy so put this as a priority in your schedule.

1. Establish time together with each other on a regular basis.
2. Read 1 Timothy over and over and it will be mutually edifying.
3. Join together in prayer with the aim of developing spiritual maturity.
4. Create a time to encourage, equip, and pray for one another.
5. Be intentionally relational through faithfulness together in prayer.
6. Invite others who have a kindred spirit to join you.

PROLOGUE

WHERE ARE THE PILLARS?

"and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision;" Galatians 2:9

They were pillars of the church.

They were perceptive men.

They were men of repute.

They were men of authority.

They were men of discernment.

They were men of encouragement.

Our prayer for men. We pray that in your own lives you will find increased stability, faithfulness, and spiritual maturity. It starts with surrender in the presence of God. He is the source of our strength, longevity, and impact. We are praying for men like those who Paul called pillars of the church. Every church needs stable men who are willing to take responsibility. Men who hold others up. We pray that God is making you into a man like these men in Galatians 2:9. They were not perfect men but they were faithful men.

PRAYERLESSNESS: OPERATING AS IF GOD IS NOT WITH YOU.

Prayer is about the awareness of the presence of God. When we are admonished to pray without ceasing we are being called to walk every step in the presence of God.

Ephesians translates *Atheos* for us simply: without God. Ephesians 2:12-13 “You lived in this world without God and without hope. But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.”

I don't want to live without God.

I don't want to operate as if He is not present.

God is at work in every place.

God is at work in every situation.

God is at work in every person.

As CS Lewis said, “We may ignore, but we can nowhere evade the presence of God. The world is crowded with Him.”

When we understand this, we bump into Him everywhere. We see him in the interruptions. We hear him in the mundane.

HOW IT STARTED

My friend Bill Elliff asked me last year what I was doing to create a culture of prayer in the church. I did not have an answer other than, “I pray and teach on prayer.” I asked Bill to share with me what they did. He told me that for the last 26 years that he met on Wednesday mornings for two hours and prayed with his leaders and staff and church. He talked through it with me. When I left I had a sense that I had been with a man who was serious about prayer.

As I drove home, I wrestled with the Spirit about what I should do. Honestly, I did not want to get up early and disrupt my own schedule at home. By the time I made it back to Independence County the Lord had settled it in my heart. I knew that I ought to be meeting weekly, fervently, and early with a group of men.

We started with 8 guys. To the credit of our leaders, they responded and committed to meet with me and pray. To the credit of one of a family in the church, they let us meet at their cafe before it opens. At 5:15 AM we start with prayer. Usually, I will say a few things to set the tone and pray over the men. Then we use Donald Whitney’s approach in his book, “Praying Scripture”.

It has been so good to shepherd this with our men. The second week we had 12 guys. Within the next month we had 20 men. Soon it turned to 40 men. We have went at a slow pace through the passages and added men week after week.

When we start into a passage like 2 Timothy 2:2 we linger on the words like received, faithful, and able. Men in our group mentioned the stewardship we have been given and we turned that into a prayer of gratitude. Another asked the Lord to make us men who can be entrusted with the gospel. Another man confessed his need for faithfulness and I asked him to lead us all in that prayer. We prayed for God to enable us. We prayed of more men. We prayed for Paul and Timothy relationships.

Our time together goes fast and it has an accumulative affect. Since we started we have prayed 20 weeks through Titus and asked God to help us set in order the things that at lacking. We have prayed

40 weeks through 2 Timothy and asked God to make us faithful men who influence others and guard what has been entrusted to us. Now we have spent over 60 weeks in 1 Timothy and we are praying for God to help us to be pillars of truth and grounded in Christ.

Last week, when we arrived every table at the restaurant was full of men. We have 80 men who come off and on and around 50 each week now. This time has become one of our favorite times of the week. It is a tremendous thing to walk into a room full of men with their Bibles open, leaned in, and ready to seek the Lord.

Just start. Resolve it in your own heart. Find someone who has a kindred spirit and establish a time of prayer and then invite others into it. I recommend using a method like praying through scripture. It creates an

incredible dynamic week after week. It let's scripture set the agenda for what you pray about.

Each Wednesday I send a text to the men and encourage them to come and give them the passage we will be praying through.

I tell men to come for three reasons:

1. Come to encourage your pastor. I can't lead this church alone. I need brothers. I need their support.

2. Come to be encouraged. They personally need a weekly time to be disciplined and help make disciples.

3. Come to encourage other men. Other men need their presence in their lives. Other men need someone to care enough to get to know them.

The prayer meeting has helped foster unity, maturity, and humility among our men. I want to do this the rest of my life with whoever God would put in the room.

As you start working through this booklet, I pray that God uses this as a tool to help you develop the habit of praying through scripture with other. May the Lord show up in your lives and may He start something with you that will encourage others.

1 TIMOTHY 1:1-2

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,

*To Timothy, a true son in the faith:
Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.*

SESSION ONE

1 TIMOTHY 1:1-2

We don't like to be commanded or told what to do as a general rule. This is an increasing issue in our day. Following rules, being a person that is easy to lead, resisting the compulsion to always need accommodation is part of growing up into maturity.

How about you?

Are you teachable?

Are you lead-able?

Are you responsible?

Paul was sent.

Paul was commanded.

Paul was receptive.

Paul was obedient.

Men who are able to be under authority are men who are able to handle having authority. Paul was a father to Timothy. Spiritual discipleship happens when men give permission to be directed and when men take responsibility to give direction. May God give us a teachable spirit.

We want to be men who last.

Psalms 15:1-5 describes a man who is not easily moved and does not take responsibility for selfish gain. As we start this study, let's consider this incredible

relationship between Paul and Timothy and the example that Timothy had in his spiritual father, Paul. Let's also consider the willingness of Timothy to be led, coached, and sent.

Psalms 15:1-5

Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, And works righteousness, And speaks the truth in his heart; He who does not backbite with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend; In whose eyes a vile person is despised, But he honors those who fear the Lord; He who swears to his own hurt and does not change; He who does not put out his money at usury, Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved.

A FEW EXAMPLES OF PRAYERS IN THE PASSAGE

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

Lord, help us to remember that we also are a sent people. We have been set apart for your purposes.

by the commandment of God our Savior

God, we know that your commands are better than our plans. Direct us in the way that we should go and save us from ourselves.

and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,

We do not have a hope that is wishful, we have a confident hope. Lord, thank you for establishing your purposes. Thank you for making good on your promises.

To Timothy, a true son in the faith:

Lord, we are reminded of those who have poured into us and been spiritual fathers and mothers. Help us Lord to stay true to what we have been taught and to love others the way we have been loved.

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

Father, we know that there is no peace apart from your grace and mercy. We know there is no peace without our surrender. We ask you to lead us in the way that we should go.

1 TIMOTHY 1:3-4

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God's work—which is by faith.

SESSION TWO

1 TIMOTHY 1:3-4

Paul loved the people of the local church at Ephesus. He spent 3 years with them. He was able to say to the elders, when he met them at Miletus, "I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable" (Acts 20:20) and "I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27), and "for three years I did not cease night and day to admonish everyone with tears" (Acts 20:31).

1 Timothy 1:3-4

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Urged to Stay in Ephesus - Be a man of stability.

Urged to Stand Against False Teaching - Be a man of character.

Urged to Advance God's Work - Be a man of vision.

Ephesus " ... for one momentous generation, Ephesus was the literary focus of early Christianity, and by its compilations ...influenced Christianity more than Jerusalem, Antioch or Rome" Ephesus became the base for evangelism of the whole of Asia. According to Luke, God did extraordinary things in Ephesus. That church

had Paul and Luke, Apollos, Timothy, John, Mary the mother of Jesus, Onesimus, and other consequential members. It was the place that fostered the canon of scripture.

"Love the brotherhood" - Peter the Apostle wrote this to them.

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by the commandment of God our Savior

God, we know that your commands are better than our plans. Direct us in the way that we should go and save us from ourselves.

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

Father, we know that there is no peace apart from your grace and mercy. We know there is no peace without our surrender. We ask you to lead us in the way that we should go.

1 TIMOTHY 1:5-6

Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk,

SESSION THREE

1 TIMOTHY 1:5-6

Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 1:5

“The purpose of this instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith.”

Truth without love is not entirely true. Truth without grace is not the whole truth. Grace without truth is not really gracious at all. Love without honesty is not mature love.

Two ditches and a false dichotomy:

1. Religious legalists who are strict and pure in their ideology but lacking in empathy and compassion.
2. Religious liberals who are open-handed and inclusive in their teaching but lacking in clarity and fidelity.

Paul says, the reason that I warn you of false things, instruct you of right things is because I love you and want you to love others.

Love is kind enough to have uncomfortable conversations.

Love is patient enough to walk through the messy stuff with someone who doesn't want to hear it.

Love is selfless enough to risk conflict for what is best for others.

Love is hopeful enough not to be furious and outraged at those who are still figuring things out.

“Love does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.”
1 Corinthians 13:5-6

Let's be honest, love is not easy.

“Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk,” 1 Timothy 1:5-6

God, give us love.
A pure heart
A good conscience
A sincere faith
Keep us from turning aside and idle talk.

1 TIMOTHY 1:6-8

From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;

SESSION FOUR

1 TIMOTHY 1:5-6

The Bible is the fundamental way God helps us to stay on course and not swerve from the faith. This passage delves into:

1. How we read the Bible
2. How we understand the Bible
3. What we use the Bible for,
4. What our motives are.

1 Timothy 1:6-8

From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;

The Bible gives us the verbiage we need to express what to pray and how to pray and even how to think about it. As we think about work, family, ourselves, and others sometimes it is hard to even know what to pray.

Psalm 19:7-8

“The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;”

We all need to tend to our souls. The Bible revives the soul. We all need something we can count on. The Bible

makes us wise. We all need a way to cope emotionally. The Bible rejoices the heart. We all need help seeing the world through the right lens. The Bible illuminates our perspective.

Without the Word of God, we swerve off into a ditch.

1 TIMOTHY 1:9-11

understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.

SESSION FIVE

1 TIMOTHY 1:9-11

What is it in our lives that is not congruent with the way of Jesus and the teaching of scripture? When we want things right then we welcome scrutiny. Once I built a house. I had never built a house before and I had a friend who was willing to help me. He knew what to do and what not to do. I learned his mannerisms. He had a way of clearing his throat when I was doing something the wrong way. I would laugh and say, “Richard, am I doing this correctly?” He would then tell me the way to do it.

This passage is a list of behaviors and actions that do not go along with living a life that is mature in Christ.

1 Timothy 1:9-11

“understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.”

Like the ten commandments of the Old Testament, the commands of God are not arbitrary. They are protective and provisional. God commandments are not yokes of burdens but rather that free us from harm and hurt.

1 TIMOTHY 1:12-14

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

SESSION SIX

1 TIMOTHY 1:12-14

Have you seen this quote from JD Greear? "If the father in a family comes to Christ, there is a 93% chance that everyone in the family will come to know Christ."

I am praying for men today. You guys have so much influence and responsibility. I would like to be together with you on Thursday mornings at the Whistle Stop at 5:15 AM until 6:00 AM. This is a time of encouragement, discipleship, prayer, and learning the Bible verse by verse. It has become one of my favorite times of the week.

This week our text is in 1 Timothy 1:12-14.

"I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus."

He has given me strength.

He has considered me trustworthy.

He has appointed me into His service.

He has shown me mercy.

He has poured out his grace on me abundantly.

1 TIMOTHY 1:12-14

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SESSION SEVEN

1 TIMOTHY 1:12-14

This week our text is in 1 Timothy 1:12-14. I can't wait for this time of prayer! Men, this is what a christian testimony is.

"I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

He has given me strength.

He has considered me trustworthy.

He has appointed me into His service.

He has shown me mercy.

He has poured out his grace on me abundantly.

Yesterday at church a man came to talk to me and told me he planned to attend our men's brotherhood on Thursday for the first time. I told him that I know we meet early but it is the best time for men to meet. So many of our men have to get to work, have responsibilities with their young families, and are committed in the evenings with community responsibilities.

1 TIMOTHY 1:15-17

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

SESSION EIGHT

1 TIMOTHY 1:15-17

You and I will declare with our conversations and conduct what is the Good News of our lives.

Good news, it is Friday.

Good news, there is a sale at our favorite store.

Good news, we got a raise at work.

Good news, congress voted for or against something.

Good news, we have a new PR.

The list can go on and on and there is nothing wrong with gladness and celebration. The problem comes with proportion. The Bible calls it inordinate affection (Colossians 3:5). When the highlight reel of our lives get disproportionate and there is an absence of proclaiming and declaring that Jesus is the Good News of our lives.

Make much of Jesus.

Tell of His wondrous works.

Proclaim it from the rooftop.

Do the work of an evangelist.

Live like the gospel matters.

If someone would give you a billion dollars would you trade what you have in Christ for it, of course not.

1 TIMOTHY 1:18-19

Timothy, my son, here are my instructions for you, based on the prophetic words spoken about you earlier. May they help you fight well in the Lord's battles. Cling to your faith in Christ, and keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked.

SESSION NINE

1 TIMOTHY 1:18-19

I am a student of ministerial tenure and seek out men who quit with a heart to understand and encourage. This study has expanded with admiration to men who last. So, these types of passages really grab my attention.

“Timothy, my son, here are my instructions for you, based on the prophetic words spoken about you earlier. May they help you fight well in the Lord’s battles. Cling to your faith in Christ, and keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked.

1 Timothy 1:18-19

How does a person last?

We will pray through this insightful passage Thursday morning.

Men who last develop and invest in accountable relationships.

Men who last remember and hold onto their calling and responsibility.

Men who last heed the warnings and maintain a clear conscience and character.

I was reading a list of reasons ships sink on a marine website. Here is what I found.

Ships sink due to a few main reasons.

1. Storm wind and other forces forcing the ship to lean at dangerous angles to the port or starboard sides.

2. Overloaded weight to the vessel can force it lower into the water producing a loss of stability.

3. Grounding and Collision are another reason ships sink and this is typically due to not paying attention or lack of training.

4. Negligence of not maintaining things can lead to a ship going down.

5. Finally, war time casualties and piracy have taken many a ship.

1 TIMOTHY 1:20

Hymenaeus and Alexander are two examples. I threw them out and handed them over to Satan so they might learn not to blaspheme God.

SESSION TEN

1 TIMOTHY 1:20

Men don't play around with things that can destroy the people they love.

Paul did not play around with things that would destroy the Lord's work. In the last verse of 1 Timothy chapter 1 he says a strong thing and strange thing. He says that

“Hymenaeus and Alexander are two examples. I threw them out and handed them over to Satan so they might learn not to blaspheme God.”

1 Timothy 1:20

In the name of love whole denominations have allowed ungodly people to teach things that are destroying them. In the name of inclusiveness seminaries have hired deans and chaplains that publicly disavow the Bible. Christian colleges that started out with gospel missions have been taken over by godless heretics.

Not Paul. Not in the church he planted. Not with his son in the faith, Timothy. Not while he was in leadership.

Hymenaeus:

“and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some.” 2 Timothy 2:17-18

Alexander:

“Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. Beware of him yourself, for he strongly opposed our message.” 2 Timothy 4:14-15

On one side you have a guy who is teaching false things and on the other side you have a guy who wants to stop the teaching of faithful things. Both are rotten. Teaching things that are contrary to the word of God is harmful and so is silence on things that God has said.

So Paul says that he turned them over to Satan. What does that even mean?

Paul’s approach to those who harmed him:

1. Acknowledge the harm and don’t ignore it or act as if it didn’t happen.
2. Give them over to the Lord, don’t burden yourself down in revenge.
3. Warn others and establish healthy boundaries.
4. Recognize what the impact of the abuse/mistreatment has been.

“Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. Beware of him yourself, for he strongly opposed our message.”

2 Tim 4:14-15

Most of us have a hard time processing pain. We either tend to minimize it or we over-inflate it.

One of the best things we can do with pain is say, “that hurt”. Paul tells Timothy, “Alexander hurt me”. He also tells the Lord, “Lord, Alexander hurt me. Will you take care of him”.

When we give our pain to the Lord we trust him to settle the injustice and we free ourselves.

Have you ever been hurt?

1 TIMOTHY 2:1

*First of all, then, I urge that
supplications, prayers, intercessions, and
thanksgivings be made for all people.*

SESSION ELEVEN

1 TIMOTHY 2:1

Praying for other people is so fundamental to the Christian experience.

Paul says, “Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy 2:1: “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people...”

Three kinds of prayers we can pray for others:

1. Ask about their needs and pray for God to provide for them.
2. Let them know you are praying on their behalf.
3. Pray for them and if you can pray with them and tell God that you are thankful for them as they hear you pray.

When we meet to pray on Thursdays we have three parts to our prayer time.

1. A pastoral exhortation and prayer over the group.
2. A text driven prayer with multiple men praying.
3. A time for men at each table to share and pray for one another.

1 TIMOTHY 2:3-4

*First of all, then, I urge that
supplications, prayers, intercessions, and
thanksgivings be made for all people*

SESSION TWELVE

1 TIMOTHY 2:3-4

Paul says to pray for everyone and live peaceful and dignified lives. Why?

“This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

1 Timothy 2:3-4

Paul tells Timothy that God wants everyone to be saved and God wants everyone to come to know the gospel. This way of seeing people and understanding the will of God made Paul an evangelist.

- At midnight in the jail cell.
- At Athens in the Areopagus.
- At Cæsarea to king Agrippa.
- With Lydia outside of Philippi.

In the most hedonistic pagan places Paul looked at people and was stirred deeply knowing that the gospel was for them.

Everyone had a chance and choice. The gift of repentance was offered to the Jews first and then the door was open to the rest of us gentiles.

John Calvin wrote this: "No man is excluded from calling on God, the gate of heaven is set open unto all

men. Neither is there any other thing which keepth us back from entering in save only our own unbelief"

So pray for all men.

2 Peter 3:9 tells us, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Here it is in the amplified version:

"The Lord does not delay [as though He were unable to act] and is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is [extraordinarily] patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

Everyone needs repentance and forgiveness. When Jesus came preaching repentance he encountered Jews who said, "why should we repent, we are the sons of Abraham" and Gentiles who said "even the dogs get the crumbs". Friend your spiritual heritage will not prevent you or privilege you. We must all humble ourselves before God.

So here I am, just one beggar telling the other beggars where the bread is.

1 TIMOTHY 2:5-6

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

SESSION THIRTEEN

1 TIMOTHY 2:5-6

"Men's prayer meeting, It's Challenging and so Refreshing! Challenging to get up at 4:45 to go, but so refreshing to be around a group of men that are great Christian men and open to share the (experience) of there relationship with God through scripture study and praying. It's a real time of encouragement and reminder to include Jesus in everyday living thought process, and including God in daily conversations." - Scott Perkey

This week we are in 1 Timothy 2. The verses are:

5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time.

What an incredible declaration of Jesus.

1. The Divinity of Christ.
2. The Exclusivity of Christ.
3. The Transcendancy of Christ.
4. The Incarnation of Christ.
5. The Atonement of Christ.
6. The Eternality of Christ.

Paul presents the Christ of the ages. Christ is the mystery upon which all of redemption hangs.

"Everything about our lives -- our attitudes, motives, desires, actions, and even our words -- is influenced by our view of God," wrote Bill Bright

"What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us," wrote AW Tozer in The Knowledge of the Holy.

However, we should never let our view of God become a cause for an inflated estimation of ourselves. This kind of smug superiority is not what a proper view of God produces. Instead, it produces a peaceful humility and joy.

"We must learn to measure ourselves, not by our knowledge about God, not by our gifts and responsibilities in the church, but by how we pray and what goes on in our hearts," writes theologian J.I. Packer in *Knowing God*.

1 TIMOTHY 2:7-8

For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling;

SESSION FOURTEEN

1 TIMOTHY 2:7-8

I don't like to admit when I am angry. It seems immature and reveals my flaws when I let my anger be exposed. I want to be so composed and selfless that I don't let anything make me angry. That is impossible in a world with legitimate things to be angry about.

Sure, part of maturity is learning not to be easily angered and not taking everything personal. We all will get upset and we all will get our feelings hurt so what we do with our anger is so crucial.

“For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling;”

1 Timothy 2:7-8

The Lord used Paul greatly and I believe one of the reason was that Paul learned to focus. He limited his work to his calling. Men who are called have to set parameters. Part of being humble is learning to work in the space and place God has called you.

Paul had a desire to see men pray, worship, and work together without anger and quarreling.

Focus helps keep anger in check.

Prayer helps keep anger in check.
Worship helps keep anger in check.
Humility helps keep anger in check.

What to do with anger:

1. Pray and set our mind right.
2. Worship and set our heart right.
3. Humble ourself and set our posture right.
4. Remember what we are called for.
5. Give grace to our brothers and sisters.
6. Make it our aim to not be quarrelsome.

Paul casts a vision of men in the church. They were praying men. They were worshipping men. They were peacemaking men. They were men who had learned to control their anger for the sake of the gospel.

“A sure sign of the presence of idolatry is inordinate anxiety, anger, or discouragement when our idols are thwarted. So if we lose a good thing, it makes us sad, but if we lose an idol, it devastates us.” - Keller

Anger can be a helpful tool to assess where our heart is. When we get disproportionately angry this reveals an area we need to investigate.

Proverbs 26:20-21

Without wood a fire goes out; without a gossip a quarrel dies down. As charcoal to embers and as wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome person for kindling strife.

Another translation says: “Without wood, the fire goes out; and where there is no secret talk, argument is ended.”

"Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger..." James 1:19

God help us to not be angry men but when we are God help us to use our anger to grow in maturity and unity and self awareness.

1 TIMOTHY 2:9-10

likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works.

SESSION FIFTEEN

1 TIMOTHY 2:9-10

What does it mean to be modest?

Why does God care? When I was younger I did not have a fatherly mindset and just thought “I am not my sister’s keeper”. You do you and I will do me. Things have changed for me. Teaching about modesty should not be about the subjugation of women.

Dads need to help their sons and daughters to have a restored sense of worth and not using worldly metrics. Treasuring one’s self with a right estimation produces a modesty that does not seek constant validation from others.

If you believe the Bible, then your worth was settled at creation and on the cross. Paul is teaching women in the church to create a culture within the church where they dress in such a way that they express that their beauty and worth is not found primarily in their outward appearance.

A good definition of modesty is a self-governing, self-respecting self-worth that does not have to obsessively self promote.

“likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but

with what is proper for women who profess godliness—
with good works.” 1 Timothy 2:9-10

We know that there is nothing wrong with jewelry and hairstyles. What Paul is saying is that those things are not where our worth comes from.

It should be an interesting discussion about what is description and prescription and what is narrative and normative when it comes to Bible interpretation.

1 TIMOTHY 2:11-14

Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

SESSION SIXTEEN

1 TIMOTHY 2:11-14

In the fallen world Adam stood by silent. Genesis 3 tells the story of the first temptation and verse 6 gives a footnote that is easily missed. Adam was there all along. He stood by quietly while satan made his argument. He stood by passively while his wife was deceived and drawn away. He stood by and let her carry her burden and his as well. The first sin included a man abdicating his God-given responsibility. The first sin was a man problem (Romans 5:12).

Our father Adam had and every man since then has a sinful propensity to shirk their role of spiritual leadership and headship. In this fallen world men are silent when they should be speaking. In this fallen world men's children are left to fend for themselves. In this fallen world women are used instead of loved and cared for.

What did Paul face when he started new Christ-centered communities in the middle of pagan hedonistic Roman cultures? How did he combat worldly mindsets and the antithesis of God ordained manhood and womanhood? In places where women were prostituted and enslaved for sex and children were mistreated and used as well, how did the church turn the world upside down? In places where men constantly played and pleased how did Paul establish the redemptive counter-cultural community of the local church?

He called men to be spiritual leaders. He insisted they step up. He called them to prayer. Be men of prayer. He called them to lift holy hands. Don't just stand there quietly in worship- sing and lift up holy hands. Live surrendered, engaged lives. Lead your family. He called men to set aside their anger and excuses and constant complaining and

quarreling. Men, we are not leading our family with one grip session after another or constant critical commentary. We will give an account for how we allowed and entertained distracting conflicts. In the end they will be poor excuses for our opting out of personal responsibilities and spiritual leadership.

In this fallen world the women carry the water, birth the babies, read the bedtime stories, get the kids ready for church, and do it all while men play and sit by silently. Paul says, not in God's house, not in godly houses.

“For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived...” 1 Timothy

In the Biblical narrative Adam was given charge over the garden. He was given an ordered world. Yet under his watch, chaos and sin entered in. Scripture tells us that Adam's decision was to sin and his sin was a decision.

The Gospel is a new creation, a reordering, and a turning from sin. In creation man lost control of his world. In the gospel, temperance, peace and self control is restored by the result or fruit of the Holy Spirit.

1 TIMOTHY 2:13-14

For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

SESSION SEVEN TEEN

1 Timothy 2:13-14

What a conversation this morning we had with the men over 1 Timothy 2. “For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.” 1 Timothy 2:13-14

Here are some notes:

Why do men choose to ruin their lives?

1. We minimize our sin
2. We lustfully desire sin
3. We pridefully disobey
4. We lose an appetite for God in boredom
5. We are resist discipline and sin
6. We are selfish with an independent spirit
7. We are entrapped and triggered to sin
8. We doubt and disbelieve what God has said

8 Consequences of that decision

1. Shame
2. Curse
3. Pain
4. Disorder
5. Separation
6. Loss of Fruitfulness
7. Legacy
8. Death

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

Scripture says that Adam willingly wrecked his life.
“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned”

Romans 5:12

It is puzzling why he would not believe that God, God’s Word, and what God had provided was enough. And, it is nonsensical in our lives as well.

I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live. Deuteronomy 30:19

Last week we finished the end of 1 Timothy 2 and the childbearing of Eve saving her and all of us. From her seed would come the Son that would crush satan.

This word crush stayed with me all week. It became my prayer in my own life. Lord, crush the head of the snake. Crush his whispers of distraction. Crush his lies against God. Crush his influence in our community. Crush the poison that would ruin the innocence of our children. Crush my pride.

There’s no greater stewardship for the Christian man than the responsibility of maintaining his desire for God.

Guard your heart and fan the flame of faith.
2 Timothy 1:6

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.

Things That War Against Our Desire:

1. Painful Experiences.
2. Offenses.
3. Low Standards of Others.
4. Distraction
5. Criticism
6. Loneliness/ Isolation
7. Disappointment in myself
8. An unsustainable pace
9. Delayed results not on my terms
10. Opposition

1 TIMOTHY 3:1

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desires a good work.

SESSION EIGHTEEN

1 Timothy 3:1

Are you stretched?

“This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.” 1 Timothy 3:1

In one verse the word desire shows up two times. The first word Paul uses is oregomai. It means to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something. The second word Paul uses is epithumeo (from epí = upon, used intensively + thumós = passion). It means to set your passions on something or we might say set your heart on something.

Most of us avoid stretching. We are told to do it. We know it is healthy and yet we don't make it our practice. Active people know better. People who accomplish feats know well the necessity of being stretched.

If you intend to please God you will be required to stretch for it. It will not happen while you remain in a comfortable position. It will not be convenient. It will not be easily accomplished. It will not be on your terms. It will not be inexpensive nor will it be done with a minimal amount of time. You will have to reach out and stretch to get ahold of what God wants. Lots of people opt out of anything so undignifying and humiliating. They would not dare put themselves in such a vulnerable position as to appear not enough for the task.

It is the very posture of need that God requires from His servants. The second “desire” used in the verse is an inner passion. We might say that this person sets their whole heart on it. The man who stretches to be used of God sets his heart on a good work.

There is no replacement for wholeheartedness.
Passion shows up early and stays late.
Passion overcomes obstacles.
Passion pours out like a drink offering.
Passion allows the heart to be broken.
Passion gives and gives some more.
Passion is hopeful.
Passion is not jaded and cynical.
Passion finds a way.

1 TIMOTHY 3:2-3

A pastor then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

SESSION NINETEEN

1 Timothy 3:2-3

We all act out of character at times.

I think of it as losing our dignity. Personality paradigms like the enneagram call it disintegration. It is the moment when we are under pressure and we allow someone or something to push us outside of our personality.

Maybe you are at your base a very controlled person and something has you screaming.

Maybe you are naturally an outgoing person but conflict has you avoiding and isolating.

Maybe you pride yourself on being self assured but pressure has rocked your confidence.

Live long enough and you will have a crisis of self. Deep down we are all contradictions. We are sinful in that we miss the mark.

The character of God is without contradiction. His nature is unchanging and his reactions are consistent. What does it mean to be godly? It means to be whole and dignified.

When the Bible makes lists it is helpful to consider them in the context of God's character and his hopeful and loving intention for us.

God is just.

God is loving.

God is faithful.

God is ever present.
God is good.
God is no respecter of persons.
God is wise.
God is perfect.
God is a peace.
God is patient.
God is self-sufficient.

We are not God and but He will give us His Spirit. After 30 years of being a pastor I look at the following list and know without grace and God's Spirit I am hopelessly disintegrating. Without His power and work within me I am like the fool who returns to the folly and self ruin.

1 Timothy 3 makes a list of what a godly man should be like.

“A pastor then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;” 1 Timothy 3:2-3

We will tackle Timothy's list this week in our prayer time with men. It will be much much harder than legalism. It is be about godliness and holiness. Prepare to be relieved and stretched at the same time.

1 TIMOTHY 3:3-4

not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence

SESSION TWENTY

1 Timothy 3:3-4

I have a friend named Aaron who is gentle and patient. I asked him why he was this way the other day. He sent me the following prayer that he has written out as a daily prayer:

“God, You invite me into a peaceful relationship with You where I can be fully known and loved. You also invite me to pursue peace with others around me. Please help me to approach my relationships with grace and wisdom. Grant me the knowledge to recognize when I should speak and when I should listen as I pursue peace. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

The prayer was birthed from Hebrews 12:14

“Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.” Hebrews 12:14

Aaron owns the local Freddie’s. He sees reminders of impatience. I am sure he sees example after example of quick tempered people who do not manage their emotions well.

1 Timothy 3:3-4 describes a temperate man.

He is “not addicted to wine, not a bully nor quick-tempered and hot-headed, but gentle and considerate, free from the love of money [not greedy for wealth and its inherent power—financially ethical]. “He must manage his own household well, keeping his children under

control with all dignity [keeping them respectful and well-behaved]”.

A temperate man is a man who is in control of his temperature. It is the difference between a thermostat and a thermometers. A thermometer just succumbs to whatever is going on. A thermostat set the response.

1 TIMOTHY 3:5-7

(for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

SESSION TWENTY-ONE

1 Timothy 3:5-7

Hunting Season

The hunter studies the movement.

The hunter prepares the plot.

The hunter knows what entices.

The hunter sets the trap.

The hunter lays wait.

The Bible says we are hunted by an enemy. Sin crouches at the door (Gen 4:7). The wicked catch men. (Jeremiah 5:26) The enemy knows where we are vulnerable and when we are prone to fall for his schemes.

1 Timothy 3 mentions two ways the enemy ensnares:

1. He seizes upon our immaturity and entraps us in our pride.

2. He exploits our missteps and regrets and “disgraces” us with shame and discredits us with accusations.

Disgrace is a loss of position. Satan is constantly trying to convince the people of God to concede the high ground.

As we prepare for Thursday’s prayer meeting with men the following verses will be our focus:

“He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.”

1 Timothy 3:6-7

Don't rush the process and don't give the enemy a bullet to shoot you with.

1 TIMOTHY 3:6-7

not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

SESSION TWENTY-TWO

1 Timothy 3:6-7

When immature people are put in leadership.

This week we're studying 1 Timothy chapter 3 where Paul warns Timothy not to put new converts in leadership positions because it can hurt them and others.

Here's a list of some things that come to mind when immature people are put in leadership positions.

1. They can be filled with pride. 1 Tim 3:6
2. They can become territorial. John 3:27
3. They can struggle to handle the weight of leadership. 2 Corin 11:28
4. They can develop an independent spirit.
5. They can mistake the results of God's favor and gifts as coming from their ingenuity and work ethic.
6. They can create schisms and discord when they reduce leading to self-promotion.
7. They can make confident assertions about things they do not understand or have not experienced. 1 Tim 1:6-8
8. They can be unable to handle the applause.
9. They can have contempt for others who "don't get it".
10. They can have a future potential ruined because they were not prepared nor equipped properly.

Paul sandwiches two verses together and mentions the devil in both of them: the condemnation of the devil and the snares of the devil.

Samson comes to mind. God used him but he was not mature enough to handle it. In the end, everything came crumbling down. Ephesians warns us, don't give the devil a foothold.

John MacArthur writes in his book that a minister can become a public speaker in short order, he can learn doctrine in a semester, but becoming a pastor is a slow way of the cross.

PRAYER IS A FUNDAMENTAL METRIC FOR SPIRITUAL MATURITY.

- An appetite for prayer
- A need for prayer
- A practice of prayer
- A priority on prayer
- A history of prayer
- A fellowship in prayer
- A change through prayer
- An awareness in prayer
- A discernment through prayer

Jesus said some things only come through prayer and fasting.

It may seem simplistic or elementary, but prayer is the practiced awareness of God, and there is no substitution for it in the life of the church and the believer.

Make it your aim if you have not done this to commit to praying every day for the next 30 days.

1 TIMOTHY 3:8-13

Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. ¹But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless.

Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

SESSION TWENTY-THREE

1 Timothy 3:8-9

What does it mean to be double-tongued?

It means speaking one thing and meaning another, the connotation is deceitfulness. It is the art of doublespeak.

Linguist William Lutz identifies the four most common types of doublespeak—euphemism, jargon, gobbledygook or “bureaucratese,” or inflated language.

We live in a day of politicians doublespeaking.

We live in a day of marketers doublespeaking.

We live in a day of corporate doublespeaking.

We live in a day of virtue signaling, gaslighting, and catfishing.

Integrity is an issue of not being duplicitous.

Who said this? “Be who you is, because if you ain’t who you is, then you is who you ain’t”.

No one is perfect but here are some guardrails to stop us from running into a ditch:

1. Avoid side conversations. Instead talk to people instead of about them.

2. When you start having imaginary conversations it is time to start having actual conversations.

3. Be slow to anger, slow to speak, and quick to listen.

4. Let your yea be yea and your nay be nay. Say what you mean and mean what you say.

5. Give others some grace and remember “we all stumble in many ways and if anyone is able to bridle his tongue he is a perfect man”.

1 Timothy is packed full of so many important issues for the man who wants to be faithful and mature.

1 TIMOTHY 3:9

*They must hold the mystery of the faith
with a clear conscience.*

SESSION TWENTY-FOUR

1 Timothy 3:9

“They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.” 1 Timothy 3:9

They must hold: Grasp it, Cling to it, Guard it, Carry it, Steward it. A godly man must be a faithful man who can handle responsibility. This baton will only be in our possession for a little while then we will hand it off to the next generation. So, while we have it we must hold/handle it well.

It is a mystery, a marvel, and a wonder. Faith can become so familiar that we lose our sense of awe. What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul. Boredom can only be a byproduct of our own ignorance and neglect.

One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts.

Psalm 145:5

We live in an explicit generation and they are looking for someone who is speaking explicit truth. Apathy will not compel a next generation.

If we want revival, we have to want God to move more than anything else in our lives. We have to be willing to address any sin that God would bring to our attention.

A clear conscience. God help us. We can't manufacture a movement of God but we can grieve the Holy Spirit and miss out on it.

1 TIMOTHY 3:10-11

And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things.

SESSION TWENTY-FIVE

1 Timothy 3:10-11

Scripture tells us that spiritual leadership in the church is a weight that must not be put on those who are not ready for it. It can hurt them. It can hurt others.

When I was in JHigh I was a big kid. I was 6'1" and 230 pounds. Our coach noticed me at school and wanted me to come try out on the team. I had never even watched a football game. I had not played any team sports. The coach gave me a pair of cleats because we did not know to buy them and would not have easily had the resources. The first time I walked into a gym I felt so awkward. Everyone had been playing together for years and I was the novice trying to act like I knew what I was doing. So, I walked over to the bench press and loaded up the plates and laid down on the bench and gave it a push. The weights came up off the rack. Gravity brought the bar down onto my chest but I was unable to get the weight to budge. I tried by myself to not draw attention but it became abundantly clear I had bit off more than I could chew. Quickly, I had to ask for help. It was an embarrassing education.

This Thursday we will pray through 1 Timothy 3:10-11. These verses are about deacons but the principles are good for anyone serving and a good caution about immaturity. Let's pray about it.

“And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things.”

1 Timothy 3:10-11

1 TIMOTHY 3:10-11

Paul told Timothy, “And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things.

SESSION TWENTY-SIX

1 Timothy 3:10-11

I need the WHY and the WHO to stay focused on the WHAT.

We are beginning to train again to get ready to trek in Nepal next year. Having a purpose helps aim my efforts in the right direction. Without a vision it is easy to get undisciplined and to stop progress.

What we monitor, we can measure, and what we measure we can manage.

Most people do not want to be measured, they don't want to be monitored, and they buck at the idea of being managed. Why would anyone submit themselves to accountability, scrutiny, or criticism?

Why is a good question.

Here is what happened when the church set aside seven men who were full of faith, the Holy Spirit and had a reputation of being men of character.

The word of God increased

The number of the disciples multiplied

A great many were obedient to the faith

Acts 6:7

If you and I could keep that vision in front of us, we would be more consistent, passionate, and present. The why matters when the testing gets hard or tiring.

Paul told Timothy, “And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things.”

1 Timothy 3:10-11

Who is a better question.

Who are you doing this for? Who are you submitting to? Who are you giving to? Who are you disciplining yourself for? Who are you being faithful in all things to?

The Who will shift our complaint to praise.

The Who will turn our flakiness to faithfulness.

The Who will require humility over hubris.

The Who will welcome accountability.

When the who is not you and the why is not you things change.

Paul writes, For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Jesus is worth the cost of scrutiny.

Jesus is worth the cost of submission.

Jesus is worth the cost of sacrifice.

Keep your hand to the plow friends, there is a “well done” coming from the Lord.

1 TIMOTHY 3:12-13

Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

SESSION TWENTY-SEVEN

1 TIMOTHY 3:12-13

hus•band•ry | 'hazb(a)ndre | noun

1 the care, cultivation, and breeding of crops and animals.

2 management and conservation:

The call of Biblical manhood is cultivation. Paul tells Timothy that mature men manage their household well. They are faithful to their wives and they keep care of their children with all dignity.

The Christian marriage is the first mission and calling to be fruitful and multiply. The Christian family is the epicenter of discipleship and evangelism. The Christian home is God's plan for hospitality and reconciliation.

Couples are partners in the gospel on a mission to save the world. Noble causes call for noble character.

1 Timothy 3 will be a great guide to led our prayers this week. Men, I am praying this Psalm for your family:

“Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways! You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be blessed, and it shall be well with you. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table.”

Psalm 128:1-3

1 Timothy 3:12

What does it mean to manage well?

The Hebrew word for Shalom is what we think of when we think of peace. Another way to think of Shalom is balance. It means to position things in life in the right order. It means to rightly value ultimate things and not disproportionately value lesser things. It is a peace that comes when things are in their proper place.

Let's be honest we all get out of balance. I know very well what it's like to have a life that tends to flow with the current towards disorder. I can easily get out of balance.

My nature and my personality lend itself towards letting things passively go undone. My compulsions gravitate towards unhealthy self focus.

Three things have helped me.

1. Community with accountability and encouragement have consistently recalibrated my wavering heart.

2. Rhythms of discipline in the spiritual practices of sabbath, worship, prayer, Bible study have retrieved my wandering heart.

3. Ultimately, I have found that the grace and spirit of God have relentlessly rebuked and returned my wicked heart.

The Christian man and the Christian home are marked by a peace from God that orders life. God loves us so much he cares about the details of our everyday home

life. He care about our finances, our health, our cleanliness, our childrearing, our schedules - all of it.

“Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well.”

1 Timothy 3:12

The good news is that He has given us all that we need to bring balance to our lives in His Word and with His Spirit.

We are walking slowly through 1 Timothy 3 on Thursday mornings and praying the text line upon line and precept upon precept. We would love to welcome men into this fellowship.

1 TIMOTHY 3:12

Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well.

SESSION TWENTY-EIGHT

1 Timothy 3:12

A one woman man.

In the book, Every Man's Battle, the author describes sexual satisfaction like sipping from bowls. He illustrates it with a man going to work and flirting with someone - sipping from that bowl. Then watching a sex scene in a movie- sipping from that bowl. Then scrolling on the phone and looking at women- sipping from that bowl. Porn is a major industry that many men drink from.

A one woman man is a man who has one bowl that he drinks from. He has a wife that gets the sum total of his affections and attention. Proverbs 5 tells men, drink from your own cistern, rejoice in your wife, be intoxicated by her love.

The word adultery means to turn away from your spouse, so a faithful man keeps his attentions on his wife and a loving wife helps him and encourages his attention.

“Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well.”

1 Timothy 3:12

This is God's plan. Sex is like fire. If it is in a healthy and holy boundary like a fireplace it can provide for the home and warm the marriage. If it is let to run wild it will

burn down the home. God set the boundaries between a man and woman within the sanctity of marriage.

Mature men are men with self control and that is “Everyman’s Battle”. The good news of the gospel is that the fruit of God’s Spirit is a restoration of self control through His power.

1 TIMOTHY 3:13

For those who have served well as deacons gain a high standing [having a good reputation among the congregation], and great confidence in the faith which is [founded on and centered] in Christ Jesus.

SESSION TWENTY-NINE

1 Timothy 3:13

“Those who serve well”.

When we pray scripture the Spirit will accompany a passage and a buoyancy in the words will happen. Key phrases will rise to the forefront of our attention. Structure will surface throughout the sentences. Those key words and structures will give us the meaning of the passage and give us the direction for which to pray.

Here we read it and we can see the obvious teaching in the text.

“For those who have served well as deacons gain a high standing [having a good reputation among the congregation], and great confidence in the faith which is [founded on and centered] in Christ Jesus.”

1 Timothy 3:13

Prayers:

Lord there are those who serve and those who don't. There are those who serve with gladness and those that moan. There are those that serve for selfish gain and those who serve to please you. You came not to be served but to serve. You emptied yourself. You laid down your life. Give us your heart.

Help us to enjoy the work.

Help us to be zealous to good works.

Help us to bear one another's burdens.

Help us to serve well.

We know that receiving is blessed but you have said that giving is even more of a blessing. We know that a whole new aspect of our Christian faith and our understanding and experience of you is gained when we join you in your work.

We want a godly legacy of investing in your kingdom. We want to be men known for serving others not ourselves.

We also know that ships are made for the seas and our faith is made to be tested.

Help us step out of the boat like Peter and know you have the power to sustain us.

Help us learn through dependence that you show yourself strong on behalf of those who have a heart towards you.

We want a bold faith.

We want a confident confession.

We want a life centered in you and on you.

We want everything you would give us and we don't want to forfeit or miss out on a thing.

The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until [it reaches its full strength and glory in] the perfect day.

Bring your radiant glory to full strength upon our lives. Shine on us and through us. Amen

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Matthew 5:16

Well this will be our prayer time emphasis this Thursday. Men, set the weekly rhythm and set your alarm clocks and pay whatever price necessary for a godly legacy and bold faith.

1 TIMOTHY 3:13

For those who have served well as deacons gain a high standing [having a good reputation among the congregation], and great confidence in the faith which is [founded on and centered] in Christ Jesus.

SESSION THIRTY

1 Timothy 3:13

Get you some.

There's a dude in heaven that you have to look up and have talk to you when you get there. He was in a battle in the Old Testament and he looked up to the sun and told it to stand in still and it held until they won the battle. (Joshua 10)

There's another guy in heaven, and it would be worth it to find him when you arrive and listen to him tell you in his own words about being thrown into the fiery furnace, and not a hair on his head was singed. (Daniel 3)

There's a lady there that elbowed her way through the crowd one day and grabbed a hold of the hem of the healers' garment, and the issue of blood that she had been plagued with for over a decade immediately was healed. (Luke 8)

Go find the Hebrew boys that would not bow down, go hear the Pentecostal preacher tell about the day he walked on water, and be sure to take time to ask Moses to recount the day the Red Sea split.

Scripture records a history of men and women who had faith. My prayer is that you will not let your life go by without experiencing it for yourself. How does one experience a great boldness in the faith?

1 Timothy 3 tells us that those who serve purchase for themselves a godly legacy and a great boldness in the faith. It's not the critic that counts , it's not the skeptic that sees the mountain move, and it's not the cynic that experiences God. It's those that join him in his work, those that throw themselves into the arena where they have no other option but to depend upon the Lord.

I say with David, I want to see the Lord in the land of the living. I want to see God move in my lifetime. I want to pay whatever price of admission that is necessary to get a front row seat to God at work.

Don't you?

1 TIMOTHY 3:14-15

These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

SESSION THIRTY-ONE

1 Timothy 3:14-15

Talk to God about people.
Talk to people about God.
Talk to God with people.

Paul writes:

“These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” 1 Timothy 3:14-15

I love the idea of a pillar holding up truth. The church is called to be built on the foundation of Christ and called to hold up the truth to a world that needs it desperately.

Paul says this in Galatians 2:9

"and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision;"

They were pillars of the church.
They were perceptive men.
They were men of repute.
They were men of authority.
They were men of discernment.
They were men of encouragement.

Our prayer for men. We pray that in your own lives you will find increased stability, faithfulness, and spiritual maturity. It starts with surrender in the presence of God. He is the source of our strength, longevity, and impact. We are praying for men like those who Paul called pillars of the church. Every church needs stable men who are willing to take responsibility. Men who hold others up. We pray that God is making you into a man like these men in Galatians 2:9. They were not perfect men but they were faithful men.

Let pray through this passage Thursday morning. Hope to see you there. Hope you will join us in establishing a culture of men who are growing in Christ and discipleship of other men.

1 TIMOTHY 3:16

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

SESSION THIRTY-TWO

1 Timothy 3:16

The mystery of the gospel is not a mystery that is secret and unknowable, it is a mystery that is unfolding and being revealed to be proven true.

This mystery is incontrovertibly consequential.

This mystery is an inexhaustible treasure.

This mystery is the revelation of reality.

This mystery is impartially available.

This mystery is powerfully affective.

This mystery is a wonder and a glory.

Paul tells Timothy that the message matters, guard what is deposited, and that this wisdom from God is (from first look to the last stone of discovery turned over) proving to be true.

Just like the path of the righteous that grows brighter and brighter as the dawning sun arises, so does the wisdom of God keeps progressively being revealed producing greater clarity and confidence.

These passages are such treasures to value.

Let's pray and marvel and wonder over the following text on Thursday morning:

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles,

believed on in the world, received up into glory.” 1
Timothy 3:16

Jesus is the mystery of God who was revealed and is being revealed. God is inviting us to join in this unfolding story.

1 TIMOTHY 3:16

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

SESSION THIRTY-THREE

1 Timothy 3:16

This morning the prayer time was centered around 1 Timothy 3:16.

We prayed for God to help us with a proper appraisal of what we have in Christ. We prayed for an increased understanding of what is valuable in life and what is not.

A friend of mine was given a ring that was found along with some junk jewelry. Later they had it appraised and found out that it was very valuable. After that, the ring was put in the safe. That is what happens with treasure.

Some things don't belong in junk drawers and at the same time some things do not belong in a safe.

When we get Christ, we get a great mystery. We get Jesus incarnate: God with us. When we get Christ we get the Spirit indwelling, empowering. When we get Christ we get a heavenly army for the spiritual battle we are in. We get an audience of angels celebrating our repentance and cheering us on. When we get Christ, we get an inclusive gospel that is available for anyone who would receive it. When we get Christ, we get an affective gospel that is down to earth and expanding throughout the earth. When we get Christ, we get a settled verdict, a finished work, and an all access pass to the throne room of Grace.

May God help us to treasure what we have been given. May God help us to tell others. The mystery is an unfolding secret that has been revealed in the person of Jesus.

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

1 Timothy 3:16

It was good to be with these men. I sat at a table with some guys that were so thankful and excited about what God is doing in their lives and about the opportunity to come to the prayer meeting.

1 TIMOTHY 4:1-2

Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared,

SESSION THIRTY-FOUR

1 Timothy 4:1-2

Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared," 1 Timothy 4:1-2

Misguided Devotions
Insincere Deceits
Misleading Demons

There are three exit ramps from faithfulness that lead men astray in 1 Timothy 4. The first is described by what they devote themselves to. This is the autopsy of departure. It starts with subtle devotions that compete for our hearts. By themselves they are fine when put in their proper place but left unchecked they can work their way to the front of the line and take a place in our hearts that should only be reserved for the Lord. When secondary things turn to idols we make them our joy, our identity, and our security. Then comes the deception. There is no greater parasite to mankind like a lie. It worms its way into our minds and hearts. It eats away and we don't even know it. Satan is the father of lies and is the origin of their introduction and that is the final part of this passage. There is a spiritual battle going on. Men need to prepare for war.

Men guard your hearts. Keep a close watch on your souls. Stand firm in the faith and return over and over to the work of tending to your conscience. Satan wants to dull your senses. He wants to misinform your conscience. He wants you to believe what is not true.

1 TIMOTHY 4:1-2

Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

SESSION THIRTY-FIVE

1 Timothy 4:1-2

The Spirit speaks expressly.

This is what Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy 4. God made it clear. Paul knew he had heard from the Lord. The Holy Spirit had moved on Paul.

This is an irreplaceable part of a living faith. Jesus said he would leave a Comforter and that Comforter is the Holy Spirit and He is a person to be experienced and expressed. The faith of the Bible is not just a moral code or a theological creed. It is not just a doctrinal statement once delivered to the saint or a philosophical construct to adhere to. The Faith is an encounter and experience with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

How do men get messed up? They grieve the Holy Spirit. They ignore the Holy Spirit.

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;”

1 Timothy 4:1-2

Notice what is in this passage?

Seducing Spirits.

Speaking Lies

Seared Consciences.

It starts subtly. It starts with an affection for lesser things sneaking its way to places in our hearts that should only be reserved for the Lord.

It develops into lies that take root in us and crowd out what is true. In this passage we read further of those who want to hijack the faith and prevent it with schisms.

It ends in a seared conscience that no longer is listening or hearing from the Holy Spirit or nourished in the Word.

How do people get messed up? There is your answer. They depart from the Word being their source of faith and practice and the Spirit being their trusted guide and companion.

You want to hear from the Lord? Open your heart and open your Bible.

1 TIMOTHY 4:3-5

forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

SESSION THIRTY-SIX

1 Timothy 4:3-5

Departing from the Faith

Most the time the deconstruction of faith happens subtly with the pulling at the threads. It starts in the nuances and compromises from orthodoxy and shifts from a priority on the gospel to a focus on disputes.

Paul tells Timothy to be careful not to get sidetracked from the faith. He writes this to the Corinthians: “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,” 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

How does that which is of first importance become no longer important?

It reminds me of a strange named chicken business. They started a little church and sold chicken dinners after church on Sunday to help pay the bills. People liked their chicken more than their church so eventually they cut back on the services and kept on serving the chicken dinners. Eventually they kept the name “Church of God Grill” but lost the ministry.

Whole denominations that started with a fire of gospel passion have been rendered ineffective when hijacked

by lesser causes. Christians who started so well have been hindered by silly myths, wild conspiracies, political crusades, legalistic hairsplitting, burdensome bureaucracies, and irrelevant theological arguments.

Our text this Thursday is found in 1 Timothy 4:3-5 and is about forbidding and abstaining and neglecting the Word instead of being nourished by it.

Jesus said to his disciples, “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.” John 4:34

If someone tries to draw you into arguments about meat, don't swallow it. See you Thursday, let's pray it through. Praying for you guys this week. Keep the main thing the main thing.

THE STILL SMALL VOICE

The phrase “still small voice” is found in 1 Kings 19:11-13. Other translations have it as “the sound of a low whisper” and “a gentle whisper”.

Gentleness, stillness, waiting all get crowded out by busyness and hurry. There is no room in the schedule for measured contemplation and soul care is rushed right over.

Humbleness, smallness, simplicity all get overlooked as insignificant and inefficient. There is no appreciation for sanctifying processes and little assignments.

Why does this matter?

It matters because if we don't understand this we miss out on having a front row seat to how God works. Jesus said that His VIP section comes with a towel and a water basin. His backstage pass requires a broom.

I don't want to miss out on what God is doing, but I will if I cram my life full of loud and busy. Other day I was rushing through Walmart and I heard the whisper of the Spirit or maybe I should say, I ignored it.

When we do not respond to the Holy Spirit of God, God will find somebody who will. There is a stewardship to responding to the Holy Spirit of God. We must practice responding immediately. We must practice responding without demands or accommodation. We must practice responding continually.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit

1 TIMOTHY 4:6-8

If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained(nourished) in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

SESSION THIRTY-SEVEN

1 Timothy 4:6-8

Keep yourself in good shape and stay away from the drizzled chocolate popcorn. Lol

Being healthy requires a strategy. Left alone we all tend to get unhealthy. This is true physically and spiritually. At our house when we intend to be healthy it all starts with what we put in our pantry and refrigerator. Certain things can't be in our house if we are training and setting goals. He can't have anything to do with them. We must be nourished with the right things.

The Psalmist wrote: "I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless. I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me." Psalm 101:3

This is where the battle starts isn't it? The chocolate drizzled popcorn should have never been brought home.

Paul coaches Timothy this way:

"If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained(nourished) in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come."

1 Timothy 4:6-8

Put these things before the brothers:
Be nourished by the words of faith.
Follow good teaching and practices.
Have nothing to do with silly myths.
Train yourself for godliness

Value what matters, it holds promise.

We need each other. Training together was one of Paul's strategies. He did not go it alone. We are to keep a close watch on what we are consuming and keep our focus on doing what leads to life and life to come. Let's pray through this passage and train together Thursday morning early at the Whistle Stop Cafe. Join us if you can.

1 TIMOTHY 4:6

Put these things before the brothers and you will be a good servant of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine that you have followed.

SESSION THIRTY-EIGHT

1 Timothy 4:6

What does a malnourished faith look like?

Paul tells Timothy to “put it to the brothers”. I like that statement. Put it to them. Don’t hold back. Challenge them. Tell them the truth and call them to gospel fidelity.

We are living in a time of spiritual malnutrition.

1. A malnourished believer is easily famished.
2. A malnourished believer struggles to concentration.
3. A malnourished believer has a loss of appetite.
4. A malnourished believer takes longer to heal from wounds.
5. A malnourished believer stunts their growth.
6. A malnourished believer is lethargic.

What causes spiritual malnutrition?

1. Consumption of worthless things.
2. Woundedness and Dis-ease
3. Isolation and separation.
4. Neglect and rejection.
5. Overworked and Margin-less living.

Many Christians experience spiritual anemia which results in their feeling weak, losing the desire to serve God, and not being excited about the faith.

“Put these things before the brothers and you will be a good servant of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine that you have followed”

1 Timothy 4:6

Brothers let me put these things before you. If you are neglecting the word then your faith will not grow, it will wither. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

To much is at stake for you to be weak.

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near... Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward... But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.”

Hebrews 10:23-25, 35, 39

Let me put it to you today my friends. Don't throw away your confidence-your faith.

1 TIMOTHY 4:7

Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness;

SESSION THIRTY-NINE

1 Timothy 4:7

The Spirit speaks expressively: stay away from dumb stuff. Be ok with not knowing the latest gossip, arguments, or newest profanities.

Christ followers are purposefully innocent about what is evil and wise about what is good. May God give you a holy curiosity not a morbid one.

My prayer for the church:

"Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I am full of joy over you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you" (Romans 16:19-20)

Paul tells Timothy to not have anything to do with silly myths but rather be nourished by the Word. At some point in a mature Christ followers life they lose their appetite for arguing about lesser things. It is a waste of your life and a mishandling of the precious time you have left.

“Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness;”

1 Timothy 4:7

“Don’t let them waste their time in endless discussion of myths and spiritual pedigrees. These things only lead

to meaningless speculations, which don't help people live a life of faith in God." 1 Timothy 1:4

"But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless."

Titus 3:9

1 TIMOTHY 4:7-9

Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance.

SESSION FORTY

1 Timothy 4:7-9

Paul used sports illustrations to make a spiritual point to Timothy. He uses one in 1 Timothy 4 with the word “exercise”. γυμνασία (gymnasia)

Ephesus was where the first gladiator competition began. So, Timothy would have been familiar with the allusion Paul was making. Gymnasia literally meant naked. It was the practice of stripping down and engaging in combat sports such as of fighting, wrestling, or pankration. These athletes wanted the freedom to move their muscles without hindrance, and they didn't want to wear any items of clothing that an opponent could grab hold of to take them down. For these reasons, they exercised and competed naked.

This would have been the image Paul was illiciting. Timothy knew what gymnasiums were. Ephesus was famous for their athletic games and training.

“... Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance.” 1 Timothy 4:7-9

Strip down Timothy and rid yourself of hinderances and anything the enemy can grab ahold of to take you down. Deny yourself and beat the body into shape.

Exercise godliness. Push yourself to see sacrifice as desirable and endurance as admirable. Get into the arena and fight. Fight for your life and fight for the glory of God.

Did you know godliness must be exercised?

Exercising takes repetition.

Exercising requires assessments.

Exercising uses a standard.

Exercising demands sacrifices.

A couple of years ago we went to Nepal to trek and something happened. We made it to the summit area but my heart started beating fast so I opted out of going up to the final peak. I sat down and watched as Julie and the others went to the top. It was disappointing to me. I had not trained enough. I was overweight.

Last year when we went I was determined not to miss out. It has been my goal to get healthy so that I don't forfeit opportunities in the next few years. 1 Timothy 4:7-8

“... Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.”

Exercising godliness requires counterintuitive behavior on our part. If we are greedy we must practice generosity. If we are jealous we must practice celebrating other people's achievements. If we are angry we must practice forgiveness. Over time we can resist unhealthy compulsions and build up healthy habits. We

can lose our appetite for useless things and gain a hunger for godliness.

The word is exercise. Expose yourself. Be vulnerable enough and honest enough to assess your heart and present it to be scrutinized by the Word of God. Then take steps, set boundaries, establish disciplines, and be faithful to rhythms of sacrifices and patterns.

Follow Jesus and seek to emulate his life.

Why? The promise of this life and the life to come. My prayer is that you won't miss out on a front row seat to the glory and goodness of God.

**BUT AS FOR YOU, TEACH WHAT
ACCORDS WITH SOUND DOCTRINE.
OLDER MEN ARE TO BE SOBER-MINDED,
DIGNIFIED, SELF-CONTROLLED, SOUND
IN FAITH, IN LOVE, AND IN
STEADFASTNESS.**

TITUS 2

1 TIMOTHY 4:10

For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe

SESSION FORTY-ONE

1 Timothy 4:10

Yesterday I had lunch with a bunch of preachers. While we were at Southside Grill, pastor Curt Howard stopped to talk to me. He had just shared the gospel with a man who received Christ. Beside our table a dear pastor, Jerry Chandler, and his wife were having lunch and I had the opportunity to catch up with them. He pastors a great church in Lynn and has served in ministry faithfully for many years.

I was encouraged to be around so many men of God. At my table, pastor Jeff Childers sat across from me and I enjoyed his conversation so much. He pastors a wonderful church in Cord.

This group of pastors are laboring. The verse from 1 Corinthians 15:58 comes to mind.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

This week our men’s group will be praying through this passage.

“For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.” 1 Timothy 4:10

I love the work of the local church and God's plan is to use people who will labor and be willing to suffer reproach for the sake of the gospel. Paul offended the Jews who wanted to add legalistic criteria to the gospel. They wanted to be gate keepers to the grace of God. He offended Romans who thought him strange for believing in the one living God and a savior who died for all men. He suffered at the hand of those who made a living of selling idols and peddling superstitions.

The inclusivity of the gospel is a scandal.
The exclusivity of the gospel is offensive.

Paul preached to people that Jesus was the Savior of all men. He was the way, the truth, and the life and that no man could come to the Father unless it was through him. What was the requirement for such free grace? Belief.

“There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12.

This kind of preaching landed Paul in jail and eventually cost him his life. If you believe that Jesus was not just some regional god or one way out of many to be spiritual you will be offensive as well. If what Jesus claimed about himself is true, then it affects everything and everyone.

1 TIMOTHY 4:10-11

It is for this that we labor and strive [often called to account], because we have fixed our [confident] hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe [in Him, recognize Him as the Son of God, and accept Him as Savior and Lord] These things command and teach.

SESSION FORTY-TWO

1 Timothy 4:10-11

Biblical Faith

If Christianity is just an exercise in wishful thinking then I wouldn't wish it upon anyone. That is not what Christian faith is at all. Here is the Biblical framework of faith:

Hebrews 11:1 says, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Or, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Faith is not void of reason or in opposition of reason. True faith discovers and is congruent with reality.

This reminds me of the following quote:

"For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance, he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries."

- Robert Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers*

We all have our presuppositions. Paul said, "We have fixed our confident hope on the living God who is the Savior of all people."

Even so, his argument for this hope and faith is appealed through empirical evidence and first hand account:

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: and that he was seen of

Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” - 1 Corinthians 15:3-10

As Paul is writing to the early church he says, there are people still alive who were in the crowd when the resurrected Jesus appeared to them, go talk to them. Don't just take my word for it.

Paul was a skilled attorney. Francis Schaeffer pointed out that, until recently, “Romans was studied in American law schools in order to teach students the art of presenting an argument.”

“It is for this that we labor and strive [often called to account], because we have fixed our [confident] hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe [in Him, recognize Him as the Son of God, and accept Him as Savior and Lord].”

1 Timothy 4:10 AMP

It is appropriate to question faith, try the spirits, and search the scriptures to see if it be so. It is good to reason and work it out. In the free market of ideas truth stands.

“...Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,” 1 Peter 3:14-15

One last thing: dig your own well. It is good to carry buckets of faith from other people's well but eventually you need to do the work and dig out your own well of faith.

1 TIMOTHY 5:1-2

Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

SESSION FORTY-THREE

1 Timothy 5:1-2

Brothers and Sisters, Sons and Daughters, Fathers and Mothers.

How we treat each other matters.

How we talk to each other matters.

How we talk about each other matters.

How we think about each other matters.

How we disagree with each other matters.

Paul tells Timothy that the church is to treat each other like family is supposed to treat each other.

“Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.” 1 Timothy 5:1-2

Our church has three things that bind our fellowship together.

1. Our mutual agreement.
2. Our directional alignment.
3. Our common attunement.

That final one is what this verse is about: the tone we take with each other. Love each other enough to rebuke one another but not harshly. Treat each other well.

Spiritual maturity produces a high view of respect and dignity. Why does Paul instruct this? Because, in the flesh we will mistreat one another. We will tear one another down. We will assume the worst and be accusers of the others instead of advocates.

Brothers do not defame each other.

Sisters be careful to maintain appropriate relationships.

1 TIMOTHY 5:2

to older women as mothers, to younger women as sisters, in all purity [being careful to maintain appropriate relationships]

SESSION FORTY-FOUR

1 Timothy 5:2

The Treatment of Women

Women are mistreated. Many are used, dominated, subjugated, and disregarded and this is true all over the world. Women carry their own curse and they end up carrying the water for their men as well.

What is it supposed to look like in the Christian home and how are they to be treated if we follow the teaching of Jesus? How are men to treat women?

Paul tells Timothy to treat them as sisters and mothers. Daughters are to be treasured.

They are to be treated with dignity.

They are to be handled with respect.

They are to be valued as souls.

We take care of our sisters. We protect them and we see them as equals. Men who see women as sisters will not sexually objectify them because they will see them through a lens of value for who they are not what they are.

We take care of them as mothers and daughters. There is to be a shared division of labor in the home. There is to be an honor in how we physically and verbally interact with them.

“to older women as mothers, to younger women as sisters, in all purity [being careful to maintain appropriate relationships].” 1 Timothy 5:2

Christian men do not look at porn when they see women as having a soul and see them as daughters who were given a life that was never meant to end up being exploited.

Christian men do not condescend women in the workplace or marketplace when they see them as sisters who deserve honor and equal treatment.

There is no place in the Bible believer’s life for anything less than the treasuring of women.

Peter writes to live with them in an understanding way and treat them with extra care. Paul writes to help them as you labor side by side in mutual respect. Colossians says do not be harsh with them and Galatians tells us that in the gospel sexism is abolished.

The sexual revolution in the 60s did not free women, it subjected them to greater exploitation. When women are not daughters and sisters, they are used instead of known. They are talked at instead of heard. They are left out instead of included.

It should not be so among Christian men. Let’s pray it through Thursday.

Discipleship takes time with others.

Discipleship takes investment in others.

Discipleship takes learning from others.
Discipleship takes commitment to others.
Discipleship takes continuing with others.

1 TIMOTHY 5:3

*Honor widows who are truly widows...
But if anyone does not provide for his
relatives, and especially for members of his
household, he has denied the faith and is
worse than an unbeliever.*

SESSION FORTY-FIVE

1 Timothy 5:3

Bring your steel toed boots and let's roll up our sleeves and go to work on this text.

We pray through scripture on Thursday mornings at 5:15AM at the Whistle Stop and this week we are in 1 Timothy 5 and on the subject of how we treat others.

It is good to spend time with other men. One of the ways this helps us is that we see what godly men do. They set in order the things that are lacking. They manage their household well. They take care of their own.

Maturing is in many ways going from the helped to the helping m, which requires a few things.

1. The right attitude.
2. The right aptitude.
3. The right servitude.

Gratitude for mothers and matriarch is an issue of human dignity. It has much more to do with us than it does them. What kind of men are we to be? Competency and means is, for most men, a choice. We tend to be capable of what we want to be capable of. Growing in maturity is also not just about being a good man but being good at being a man. Finally, godly men serve. Find a man who does not serve and you can not call him godly. Jesus came to serve not be served.

The measure of spiritual maturity is not just doctrinal correctness, intellectual acumen, or moral stamina, it is how we treat people.

We know that the quality and health of our interpersonal relationships tell us the real truth about what we believe about God and who we think we are and how we treat other.

”Honor widows who are truly widows... But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” 1 Timothy 5:3, 8

1 TIMOTHY 5:4-8

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,

To Timothy, a true son in the faith:
Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

SESSION FORTY-SIX

1 Timothy 5:4-8

The verbiage of the Bible is so important. The mindset behind phrases in the text help us think correctly. Reading the Bible for the contextual meaning is the primary work of understanding a passage and along the way we will find phrases and allusions that are like windows into the Christian way of thinking about all that pertains to life and godliness.

Paul says a mouthful of things in 1 Timothy 5 on the subject of widows and the policy of their care within families and the local church. Here is the list from the passage in 1 Timothy 5

1. Take care of widows who are in need.
2. Show great respect to your own.
3. Repay your parents and grandparents by taking care of them. This is pleasing to God.
4. Pray day and night hoping in God.
5. Ask God for help.
6. A self indulgent life is not living.
7. Command or set some policies in life.
8. Family who are able ought to take care of family who are not.
9. Do not fund bad behavior.
10. Have a reputation for good works.
11. Bring up children.
12. Show hospitality.
13. Wash the feet of the saints, serve in the church.

14. Care for the afflicted.

15. Be devoted to every good work and to fidelity in marriage.

16. Don't let your passions draw you away from Christ.

17. Don't be idlers and gossips infecting others from house to house.

18. Don't be busybodies, saying what you should not.

19. Manage your household well and don't give the adversary an occasion to slander.

20. Don't get off track it is satanic.

21. Don't burden the church and use resource that could be used for those in need.

We will take this passage and make it our prayer list today for our men's group. It should provoke us and humble us and call us to obedient action.

This passage, in particular, is saturated with a right way to think about how to treat others. It is a high bar for those who are actually in need. It is a call to family and spiritual family to be God's tool to answering their prayers. It places a hard responsibility on the believers to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit in the work of care. The cast a clear vision, to reject those who would exploit the good nature's of generous people. It sets a policy of dignity for those that receive benevolence to join in the work of the church. It place is the family life ahead of the church life in meeting the needs of family members. I build a framework of thinking about social programs that requires discernment and wisdom.

The spirit of the text is that men, especially, should take care of vulnerable women, so that Satan does not exploit their troubles and caused them to stumble.

What a credible testimony it is, when a man takes care of his family and when the stability of Christ in his life not only benefits those in his own household, but begins to benefit those in the households around him that are without men.

1 TIMOTHY

5:20-21

Do not hurry to lay hands on anyone [ordaining and approving someone for ministry or an office in the church, or in reinstating expelled offenders], and thereby share in the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin. No longer continue drinking [only] water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent illnesses. The sins of some people are conspicuous, leading the way for them into judgment [so that they are clearly not qualified for ministry]; but the sins of others appear later [for they are hidden and follow behind them]. Likewise, good deeds are quite evident, and those which are otherwise cannot be hidden [indefinitely].

SESSION FORTY-SEVEN

1 Timothy 5:22-25

The hidden sins that follow behind.

What trail are you leaving behind you? Is it good that follows after you? The closer people look, what do they find in your life?

A man of good reputation is a man who treats people well. Men who make it their aim to live a quiet peaceable life. Men who talk in ways that if everyone heard what they said, there would be no embarrassment. Men who have no need to hid their passwords from their loved ones. They have no need to constantly clear their history. Men who live steady, wholesome lives of integrity.

When I used to be a college pastor I would tell students to wait before they gave someone their heart. Vet the candidates. Anyone can run for a little while but eventually they will either keep up pace or run out of pretending.

Over time a man's character will be revealed. Paul tells Timothy to not be in a hurry when it comes to installing leaders in the church. Some men are clearly unqualified and if you put weight on their shoulders you are going to hurt them, their families, and the church. Others my look good at first but eventually their hidden sin will follow behind them.

”Do not hurry to lay hands on anyone [ordaining and approving someone for ministry or an office in the church, or in reinstating expelled offenders], and thereby share in the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin. No longer continue drinking [only] water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent illnesses. The sins of some people are conspicuous, leading the way for them into judgment [so that they are clearly not qualified for ministry]; but the sins of others appear later [for they are hidden and follow behind them]. Likewise, good deeds are quite evident, and those which are otherwise cannot be hidden [indefinitely].“ 1 Timothy 5:22-25

Right in the middle of this passage Paul tells Timothy to have a little wine for his upset stomach. These passages are clearly related. Leadership is stressful. Timothy was prone to anxiety and Paul knew these things upset him to the point of being physically sickened. Take something for your anxiety. Take something if you can't turn your brain off and go to sleep. If you need medicine take it.

Leadership is a heavy burden. Not everyone can handle the pressure. Not everyone can handle the stage. Not everyone should be a teacher, there is a greater scrutiny and accountability on those men. The church is the pillar and ground of truth, it does not matter if the man is popular, gifted, charismatic, loved, etc. If he is unqualified then do not lay hands on him, don't endorse him, do not let him represent the church.

When I was in the 9th grade I was a big kid and the football coach wanted me to play. I had never watched a game or been in a gym. The first time I went to the gym I walked in, loaded the bar with plates, laid down and shoved it up and let it settle on my chest only to realize I had lifted more than I could handle on my own. It was not budging. I was so embarrassed and had to ask for help. This is what comes to mind when a church installs a leader that is not ready.

What a sobering reminder this passage is to keep your own house in order and pay your bills. It is also a high calling to a high standard.

What follows you? Is it account after account of your negligence and dereliction of duty? Is it your low character and low standards? Is it a constant insufficient funds for lack of relationship deposits? Is it secrets, sins, and selfishness that eventually ruins every place you have bounced from over and over.

How about making this the place that you change? How about making this time the moment you start dealing with the hidden sins. Drag them out into the light. Repent of them and build relationships within the local church to support your accountability.

1 TIMOTHY 6:1-2

Those who are under the bondage of slavery should consider their own masters as worthy of full respect so that God's name and our teaching won't get a bad reputation. And those who have masters who are believers shouldn't look down on them because they are brothers. Instead, they should serve them more faithfully, because the people who benefit from your good service are believers who are loved. Teach and encourage these things.

SESSION FORTY-EIGHT

1 Timothy 6:1-2

You and I need to know the strategy.

The apostle Paul became God's tool to help spread the gospel, make disciples, advance the New Testament church, and turn the pagan world upside down. It must have been an overwhelming task for Paul to walk into cities like Corinth and Ephesus and consider what it would take to turn them from idols to serve the Living God.

What was the strategy? Paul tells Timothy to teach his people that every interaction, every relationship, every transaction mattered. When a Christ follower believes this they believe God is orchestrating everything. They believe they are sent into their jobs on a mission to make Christ known. They believe they are set in their families providential and strategically so that Christ may be introduced. They believe their landlords, bankers, bakers, and everyone else they do business with are put in their path so that they might represent Christ and share His Good News.

God is at work in every moment.

God is at work in every person.

God is at work in every place.

What does it mean to be a commissioned Christian?

Christ followers have the duty as they go to make disciples, teach, and baptize. The call of the New Testament is for believers not to just live unto themselves but for the sake of others.

You need to know the goal. The goal is for you to become a person who is a fully devoted follower of Jesus who leverages every aspect of your life to see others become fully devoted followers of Jesus.

When you and I are on mission to see non Christian people know Christ it changes the way we see them.
When you and I are on mission to see non Christian people know Christ it changes the way we treat them.
When you and I are on mission to see non Christian people know Christ it changes the way we talk to them.

Paul uses the most extreme relationship to illustrate the point.

”Those who are under the bondage of slavery should consider their own masters as worthy of full respect so that God’s name and our teaching won’t get a bad reputation. And those who have masters who are believers shouldn’t look down on them because they are brothers. Instead, they should serve them more faithfully, because the people who benefit from your good service are believers who are loved. Teach and encourage these things.“ 1 Timothy 6:1-2

1st generation Christians became missionaries to unbelieving husbands, wives, parents, kids, bosses, employees, neighbors, and even to their slave masters.

This is a similar mindset that Paul presents to the new Christians at Colossi.

”The peace of Christ must control your hearts—a peace into which you were called in one body. And be thankful people. The word of Christ must live in you richly. Teach and warn each other with all wisdom by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing to God with gratitude in your hearts. Whatever you do, whether in speech or action, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus and give thanks to God the Father through him. Wives, submit to your husbands in a way that is appropriate in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and don’t be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, because this pleases the Lord. Parents, don’t provoke your children in a way that ends up discouraging them. Slaves, obey your masters on earth in everything. Don’t just obey like people pleasers when they are watching. Instead, obey with the single motivation of fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, do it from the heart for the Lord and not for people.
“ Colossians 3:15-23

By the time the Holy Spirit is finished with us He will have Lordship over every part of our lives. He will care about the way we act at work, at the gym, at our relatives house, in the neighborhood, with our loan officer and tax account- not one aspect of our lives will be wasted when it comes to putting Christ on display. He wants it all.

Paul references the two most important things for the Jewish faith: the name of God and the word of God.

Timothy teach them that they bear His name. Teach them that they flesh out His word. Teach them that they can undo with their lips what they are trying to say with their lives. And, they can undo with their lives what they are trying to say with their lips.

Tell them the strategy. God is going to change the lives of people as they experience the way God has changed your lives. He has divine appointments planned and get them ready and thinking correctly about it.

1 TIMOTHY 6:3-5

If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.

SESSION FORTY-NINE

1 Timothy 6:3-5

6 Things to Avoid in 1 Timothy 6

The passage that we're going to dig into this Thursday is a fascinating commentary on those who obsess.

1. Obsessed with arguing and contradiction.
2. Fixated on words, that were said or not said.
3. Comparing and measuring everything through the lens of envy.
4. Jumping to conclusions and being filled with suspicion.
5. Wasting days and effort wrangling with one another, instead of seeking peace.
6. Putting selfish promotion ahead of what honors Christ and builds the local church.

Paul told Timothy, don't hang out with men who are trigger-happy. Be careful around men who weaponizes information. Set a boundary around your life with wholesome words and conversations that are in line with what Christ taught.

There are men that will burn the local church down to the ground with their words and dance around the fire without remorse. They love a good argument. They will not show up to help serve, but you can bet they'll be there for a bloodbath business meeting. It's important to

realize that commentary is not leadership and a critical spirit is not a fruit of the Spirit.

Leukemia is when the white blood cells which are the vanguards of the body that are supposed to fight off foreign intruders and protect the body begin to instead attack the body. This is what Paul is talking about. Sometimes the most well-intentioned people do not know it, but they hinder the work of Christ.

”If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.“ I Timothy 6:3-5

1 Timothy 6 lists 6 things to watch out for in our own lives and avoid getting entrapped in others.

1. Prideful -
2. Unteachable -
3. Argumentative -
4. Self Promoting -
5. Slandorous -
6. Suspicious -

1 TIMOTHY 6:5-8

and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.

SESSION FIFTY

1 Timothy 6:5-8

This week's passage:

Paul warned Timothy of self promoters teaching self promotion. "They supposed that godliness was a means of gain".

It was a sales pitch sold by men who wanted to gain influence and Paul told Timothy to stay away from it and from them. Look at how he says it:

"and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content."1 Timothy 6:5-8

Don't treat your faith like formula supposing if you are godly then God is obligated to make you rich and trouble free. If you reduce Him to that you will have a shallow faith that is not durable for the realities of life.

Don't get a little godliness under your belt and strut like a Pharisee as if you are superior to others and have a right to look down on them.

Don't develop the cancer of a critical spirit that devices you into believe you are entitled to set yourself as the assessor of others.

Instead be content and godly for God's sake.

Be godly and be godly with a content heart that is purely motivated. Be obedient not because others are watching or for the sake of self promotion. Be settled without constantly keeping score. If you believe God is in control then why go around angry, worried, and tied in a knot? Learn to trust God with outcomes instead of clamoring, obsessing, and manipulating.

Life is too short to spend it discontent. Paul says that we did not bring anything into the world and we will not take it out.

Life is too short to hold grudges.

Life is too short to be waste days arguing.

Life is too short to wish it away.

At the core our prayer meetings are not meetings where we get together and pray for more stuff. There is nothing wrong with having things but that is not what these prayer meetings are about. They are also not really about changing our circumstances even though I am sure at times we will pray for God to help us with something we are dealing with. These prayer meetings are fundamentally about seeking the Lord and asking Him to change us. As we work through the passages of God's Word we are asking God to work them into us and work them out through us.

We are praying for God to mature our faith. We are praying for God to make us into men who pour out and give ourselves wholly. King David said, I don't want to

give anything to the Lord that does not cost me. Men should want their faith to cost them. They should want some blood and sweat in it. There is a time when superficial selfishness is so undignified that it becomes insufferable and unsatisfying.

Jesus told his followers they would have to deny themselves and take up their cross. You and I need to know that.

We all love the Hebrews passage about conquering, waxing valiantly, and receiving our dead back to life but we must read further. Some “were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth“ Hebrews 11:37-38

When this is over what we have and what we have done and what we leave behind will not be appraised by worldly standards. Godly men know this. Godly men are content to spend themselves for the advancement of the gospel and the glory of God.

This last week I went to a conference and they sang this song:

All the saints and angels, they bow before Your throne,
All the elders cast their crowns before the Lamb of God and sing

[Chorus]

You are worthy of it all

You are worthy of it all, Jesus
For from You are all things
And to You are all things
You deserve the glory

It reminded me that when life is over the godly man will be satisfied with what He has done for Christ. It will be for him a crown of rejoicing. It will be a crown of righteousness. It will be a crown of glory. It will be a crown of victory and the crown of his life.

1. Crown of Glory (1 Peter 5:4) Those who answer the call of Christ and lead others.
2. Crown of Righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8) Those who look forward to and get ready for Christ's appearing.
3. Crown of Rejoicing (1 Thessalonians 2:19) Those who lead and bring others to Christ.
4. Victors Crown (1 Corinthians 9:25-27) Those who stay focused on Christ and finish well.
5. Crown of Life (James 1:12) Those that give their lives or are persecuted for Christ's sake.

2 Timothy 4:8-12

"henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

May God settle this issue in your heart and in mine and may we be satisfied and at peace.

1 TIMOTHY 6:9-10

But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

SESSION FIFTY-ONE

1 Timothy 6:9-10

I know my heart and I know how prone it is to seek something else to nurse the wound. When my pride is hurt, when my stability is threatened and I am anxious, when arguments and rejection come or stress makes me want to escape, my overwhelmed heart is an idol factory. It will run to something to pacify my bruised ego and restless soul.

How about you? Where does your mind go to find identity, establish security, and seek peace?

Let me introduce you to a pattern I have experienced.

1. Something unpleasant happens such as unsettling arguments, stressful human interactions, or mistakes and unmet expectations.

2. A feeling of helplessness comes and fears trigger obsessing of thoughts that jump to conclusions and map out worst case scenarios.

3. This emotional pain and crisis leads me to two options: take my heart to the Lord and find stability and comfort in him or turn to something else that will fill the emptiness with a sense of security.

4. Waste time scheming and working to establish security outside of the boundaries of obedience to the Lord and get entrapped and entangled in things that are not able to ultimately tend to the soul.

5. Pursue a place that does not require vulnerability and dependence or mutual submission and humility.

Insulate myself from the fear of what could happen in the future by overworking or an overemphasis on how much I can acquire.

Does any of that sound familiar? Read the passage:

”But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.“

1 Timothy 6:9-10

The language of scripture is graphic.

We fall into temptation.

We plunge into ruin.

We root all kinds of evil.

We wander from the faith.

We pierce ourselves with many pangs.

1 TIMOTHY 6:11-12

But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

SESSION FIFTY-TWO

1 Timothy 6:11-12

You are what you are becoming.

Paul calls Timothy a man of God. It was a high distinction reserved biblically for the likes of Moses, Joseph, Elijah, and just a few others.

He calls him up. Remember who you are and whose you are Timothy. Remember your confession and calling. “They” may get messed up, but you; You flee like Joseph when he was at Potiphar’s house.

Maturing men know what to stay away from and what to stay after. Timothy needed encouragement and so do we.

Read the passage with me:

”But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.“ 1 Timothy 6:11-12

Flee and Pursue: two behaviors that can tell us much about what we are becoming. What we are avoiding and what we are pursuing is called spiritual discipline and spiritual formation.

Consider what Eugene Peterson wrote in his book, *A Lone Obedience In The Same Direction*:

“It is not difficult in such a world to get a person interested in the message of the gospel; it is terrifically difficult to sustain the interest. Millions of people in our culture make decisions for Christ, but there is a dreadful attrition rate. Many claim to be born again, but the evidence for mature Christian discipleship is slim. In our kind of culture anything, even news about God, can be sold if it is packaged freshly; but when it loses its novelty, it goes on the garbage heap. There is a great market for religious experience in our world; there is little enthusiasm for the patient acquisition of virtue, little inclination to sign up for a long apprenticeship in what earlier generations of Christians called holiness.”

As we get ready for the week, let's plan to meet together this Thursday and encourage each other in this passage. Don't just plan to participate this week with your attendance. Make it your aim to partner with me in building a brotherhood of men who encourage each other to “Fight the good fight of the faith and Take hold of the eternal life”

Mario Cuomo, governor of New York tells the story of his dad and a large blue spruce in their front yard that was uprooted in a storm. His dad had the whole family get out in the rain and tie ropes on to it and pull it back upright. They pushed the roots back into the soft soil and staked it down. Today it stand 65 foot tall deeply rooted.

Men, you need to root yourself into a local church with weekly time together in the Word of God and presence of God with other men. I am praying for you and invite you to be rooted and built up.

1 TIMOTHY 6:11-12

but as for you, man of God, flee from these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, endurance, and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith. Lay hold of eternal life—you were called to it, and you made a good confession of it in the presence of many witnesses.

SESSION FIFTY-THREE

1 Timothy 6:11-12

Paul gave Timothy a distinction in 1 Timothy 6:11. He said, “but as for you, man of God, flee from these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, endurance, and gentleness.”

Men, has anyone ever called you a man of God?

Paul called Timothy up. Let me do that for you. God has a plan for your life. He wants to set you aside for His purposes. You are His. You are a man of God- if He created you, He will want to consecrate you. Stay away from things that don't matter and stay after things that do.

Fight the good fight of faith.

Lay hold on eternal life.

You will either lay hold of eternal things or temporary things will lay hold of you. Paul was a spiritual father to Timothy and he reminded Him of who he was and whose he was. He reminded him of his calling and confession.

Timothy, we saw God's hand on you.

Timothy, we witnessed your sincere faith.

Timothy, we laid hands on you and sent you out.

Timothy, we heard your first sermon.

Timothy, we are holding the rope in prayer.

Timothy, don't forget where you came from.

Timothy, don't let these men discourage you. Timothy, we are proud of you: you can do this.

Paul rooted Timothy in his local sending church so he could launch him into his pastoral ministry. Timothy needed to be reminded and encouraged that he was not alone.

How fatherly it is for Paul to encourage Timothy like this. Don't get messed up. Don't get discouraged. Don't forget where you came from and what God set you aside to do.

“Fight the good fight of faith. Lay hold of eternal life—you were called to it, and you made a good confession of it in the presence of many witnesses.” 1 Timothy 6:12

You are a man of God. Grab ahold of it and keep your hand to the plow.

1 TIMOTHY 6:13-14

I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,

SESSION FIFTY-FOUR

1 Timothy 6:13-14

May God give us a sense of gravity and urgency.

This word urge keeps coming to mind with this week's passage in 1 Timothy 6. Paul was a serious minded man. I imagine Paul did not waste words with men. He urged them to take the things of the Lord seriously. Let me do the same for you men. In a world where lots of people skip out, flake out, and stomp out - I want to challenge you to be stable, faith filled, peace seeking men who are pillars of stability.

1 Timothy 1:3-4

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God's work—which is by faith.”

1. Urged to Stay in Ephesus - Be a man of stability.
2. Urged to Stand Against False Teaching - Be a man of conviction.
3. Urged to Advance God's Work - Be a man of vision.

"I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received" - Ephesians 4:1

“I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God--this is your true and proper worship.”
Romans 12:1

Now at the end of the letter we see him urging Timothy again.

”I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing,“ I Timothy 6:13-14

Paul appeals to Timothy. Don’t get messed up Timothy. Men get messed up with spots and men get messed up with blame.

Spots are sin and mistakes that are blots that bring reproach on the ministry and our lives.

Blames are times of offending and being offended that create unnecessary barriers and obstruction to our confession and wholehearted proclamation of the Gospel and the building up of the local church.

Paul urged Timothy to stay the course. There should be an intensity and urgency to our prayers. There is a seriousness to how vulnerable we are to distractions, discouragements, and deceptions. We want to be faithful men. If so, we can not participate in things that tear down the work of God or do not build up the people of God.

1 TIMOTHY 6:15-16

which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of Lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

SESSION FIFTY-FIVE

I Timothy 6:15-16

What's the answer to worry and the solution to wrangling?

Last week I heard about a church that was filled with factions and schisms. About every week that goes by I have a conversation about church hurt or with a pastor who wants to talk about the complexities of committee life or the toxicity of church culture. Honestly, it makes me so upset and hyper sensitive to what could go wrong in our new church. If I am even more honest I will say that I have let myself fret over this fear. And then just like God has done over and over, He delivers the perfect passage and the timeliest of words.

This is what Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy 6.

Paul tells Timothy, “get your focus off men and on the Lord. If you turn your attention to what people are saying, what people are doing, what people are not saying, and what people are not doing you will drive yourself crazy”. No one lasts like that.

Timothy had a church full of situations.

1. Those who did not agree with sound doctrine.
2. Those who had an unhealthy interest in controversy.
3. Those who were filled with evil suspicions.
4. Those who were prone to useless wrangling.
5. Those who exploited godly people for selfish gain.

6. Those who drowned men and wandered from the faith and brought many sorrows.

Pastor Timothy would have had people all around him losing their minds. What was Paul's advice? He told Timothy to turn his attention to the Lord. Timothy was in charge of "the faith that was once delivered the saints" but he was also in charge of "the faith that was delivering the saints". It is so tempting to start functioning as an unbeliever. It is so tempting to let the finances, factions, and frictions arrest your attention and take your confidence in the Lord away.

Dear brother and sister, when you focus on yourself and others you will not be filled with faith and you will not operate in His strength. Let Paul's words refocus us Jesus.

- He is in charge of time and when things happen.
- He is over elements and in total control.
- He is the king over all kingdoms.
- He has the title deed to every landlords claim.
- He is over who lives and does not die.
- He is responsible for anything of lasting influence.
- He will ultimately deserve all the credit and have the final word.

Timothy, God is with you. The grace of God is an unstoppable force. He dwells in unapproachable light. His brilliance chases away all the darkness and those who hid in it.

”which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of Lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.“ I Timothy 6:15-16

When I am me-focused and others-focused I am overwhelmed. When I am God focused I am set at peace.

How about you? Are you laying hold of eternal life or does something else have a hold on you? The only antidote to the ugliness of sin and urgency of worry is to set our minds on the Lord.

”He keeps in perfect peace those whose mind is stayed on the Lord, Because they trust in Him.“
Isaiah 26:3

1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19

Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

SESSION FIFTY-SIX

I Timothy 6:17-19

Money Problems

You might say, “I have money problems” and mean that your problem is that you don’t have any money. Paul says in 1 Timothy 6 that having money can create problems.

”Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.“ I Timothy 6:17-19

Temptation #1 - Short-sightedness

“Those who are rich in this present age”: Paul reminds us of the temporary nature of wealth. We can be rich now and at the same time be making no investment in our eternity. We can have a momentary sense of security but no eternal security. We are called to live with eternity in mind and seek first the kingdom of God.

Temptation #2 - False Security

We all are tempted to “trust in uncertain riches”. What is valuable today can be junk tomorrow. The foolish man made his plans to build bigger but his life was over and Jesus asked what does it profit a man If he gains the whole world and loses his soul.

Temptation #3 - Entitlement

We can also be tempted to take what God has given to us and feel entitled. Notice the phrase “who gives us richly all things to enjoy”. A man cannot receive one thing unless he gets it from heaven. Paul commands us not to be haughty.

Temptation #4 - Wrong Metrics

“do good, that they be rich in good works”:

We can measure success with the wrong appraisal. A man who is loved is rich. A man who is at peace is rich. A man who is open handed and does good is rich in spirit.

Temptation #5 - Becoming Stingy

It is odd how that the more a person has the less they want to part with it. Paul says, “ready to give, willing to share, storing up a good foundation”. A generous man will prosper and he who refreshes will be refreshed. To whom much is given much is required.

There is a way for us to have money and money to have us. Paul tells us the antidote. Lay hold of eternal things and earthly things will not lay ahold of you.

1 TIMOTHY

6:20-21

O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,” for by professing it some have swerved from the faith. Grace be with you.

SESSION FIFTY-SEVEN

1 Timothy 6:20-21

As we work through the final section in 1 Timothy. It has been an incredible couple years together with men at the Whistle Stop. Spend a 100+ Thursdays together with a group of men in the Word (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus) and watch what God will do with it. Spend 100+ weeks praying for them and having them pray over you and the Spirit will bind your hearts together.

Paul tells Timothy that a treasure has been deposited and he is to keep it guarded.

Recognize the privilege.

Value the opportunity.

Guard the deposit.

Avoid getting caught up in irreverent babble.

”O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,” for by professing it some have swerved from the faith. Grace be with you.“ 1 Timothy 6:20-21

Boys are focused on the temporal but men are interested in things that last: the eternal. Mature Men are on guard against things that don't matter. Stay away from babbling commentary and those who like to sit in judgement constantly grading everyone else. That stuff

will get you discouraged and stop you from focusing on our calling.

Paul uses these phrases:

Swerve from the faith.

Wander from the faith.

Turn from the faith.

Depart from the faith.

Brothers, I want us to last. I want us to lock arms and go the distance together. Stay on guard against things that will discourage and rob us of what God wants in our life. Avoid those who would wander from the faith and gladly take you with them.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chad Graves is the pastor of the Compass Church in Southside Arkansas. Him and his wife Julie helped plant the church in 2021 through the Send Network. They also enjoy trekking and hiking together.

He also is a chaplain for White River Health in Batesville where he serves the staff, patients, and families.

Chad and Julie have two sons, Noah and Ethan and a granddaughter named Flora.