

Fathered by God Part 7: “Spiritual Parents” (10-27-2019)

Today: Paul & Timothy - A spiritual son and father

Acts 16:1-3 (ESV)

(1) Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. (2) He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium. (3) Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

Notes: Timothy invited to follow Paul, but requires Timothy’s circumcision. This is about **character** and **self-sacrifice** (removing an obstacle for those they would minister to – both Jews & Greeks!)

Acts 16:4-5 (ESV)

(4) As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. (5) So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily.

Notes: They took with them the proclamations of their leaders – Apostles & Elders at Jerusalem passed along to Paul to Timothy and beyond. This brought **Growth** – in numbers & health!

Acts 16-20 tell the stories of this partnership . . .

When reading watch for this pattern:

The basic pattern of discipleship: 1) Watch Me 2) Work Together 3) On Your Own!

- **Working together:** salvations, discipleship, miracles
- **Suffering together:** Persecution, imprisonment, beatings
- **Working apart:** Timothy completing a work in a city while Paul moves on to the next

Paul’s letters and Timothy’s involvement & influence . . . (For example Timothy is mentioned in Romans 16:21)

A great example is found of this in 1st & 2nd Corinthians . . .

1 Corinthians 4:1-2 (ESV)

(1) This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. (2) Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

Notes: Paul is bringing correction to the Corinthians and is discussing His role as “Father”

1 Corinthians 4:14-17 (ESV)

(14) I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. (15) For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. (16) I urge you, then, be imitators of me. (17) That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.

Notes: He is sending them Timothy as a picture of this, so they can learn to be faithful too (3rd generation)

By Paul's 2nd letter to the Corinthians Timothy is now listed as a co-writer!

2 Corinthians 1:1 (ESV)

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God that is at Corinth . . .

In fact that happens with several letters . . .

Philippians 1:1 (ESV)

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons

Colossians 1:1-2 (ESV)

(1) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, (2) To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae . . .

1 Thessalonians 1:1 (ESV)

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians . . .

2 Thessalonians 1:1 (ESV)

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians . . .

Philemon 1:1-2 (ESV)

(1) Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our beloved fellow worker (2) and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house

- Paul has involved Timothy in ministry and he has proven faithful.
- Now Paul is nearing the end of his life, imprisoned in Rome and he writes his final letter to Timothy.
- So, what does Paul encourage Timothy to do?

2 Timothy 2:1-7 (ESV)

(1) You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, (2) and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. (3) Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. (4) No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. (5) An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. (6) It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. (7) Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

Notes: Entrust what you have to faithful men, who will teach others!

Consider this life:

- It's set apart – you are not living for yourself
- It's difficult – you will suffer
- There is a pattern to follow – like an athlete get in the game and give it your all!
- The faithful and hardworking will see a crop (it just takes time)

What does this produce? The Lord will give understanding in everything!

Co-laboring as a spiritual parent, leads us closer to The Father.

It may not always make sense, and it definitely won't be easy, but it will produce growth!

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