

“WORD: Rightly Handling the Truth of God” (2 Timothy 1:8-18)
For the week of January 15, 2017

Remembering the Spiritual Disciplines

Hearing God's Word is a spiritual discipline. Why? Because if we don't discipline ourselves to hear God's Word regularly, we may hear it only accidentally, just when we feel like it, or never hear it at all. For most of us this means attending RiverLakes on Sunday where the Word of God is faithfully preached. How does regularly attending a Sunday service at RiverLakes and hearing God's Word spoken produce spiritual maturity? Write down your thoughts and discuss in your group.

Big Picture of the Passage

- Read 2 Timothy 1:8-18 as a group. What prevents Paul from being ashamed (v. 12)? Why did Paul say “...for I know *WHOM* I have believed...” instead of saying *WHAT* he believed? Why is this important today for you and I?

Verses 8-12

Verse 8 starts with “therefore,” which draws on the preceding verses. Paul had encouraged Timothy to keep strong in ministry because God has given us not timidity, but power, love, and discipline. We are to literally strengthen our resolve. How do we do that? Paul gives Timothy four action steps in these verses.

1. “Do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord” (v. 8). The “testimony” or “objective proof” of our Lord is paramount to our faith. Let's review the key aspects of our Lord's testimony:

a. His teachings. Name at least one teaching from our Lord.

b. His life. Name some of the characteristics of our Lord's life. What separated Him from every other person who ever lived?

c. His death. Describe our Lord's death. What was significant about His death?

d. His resurrection. Describe our Lord's resurrection. What is significant about the resurrection of our Lord?

2. *Do not be ashamed of the people of God* (v. 8). We strengthen our resolve when we stop caring about what others think and we set aside our fear of consequences as we share the gospel openly. Ok, this is true but the reality is many of us are hesitant about sharing the gospel with others. How can we overcome this fear? Describe your journey in the Lord and how you have shared Christ with others.

3. Be willing to suffer for the sake of the gospel (v. 8). Paul didn't consider himself a prisoner of Rome, but rather a prisoner of Christ Jesus. Why is that perspective life-changing in our walk with the Lord? Paul didn't invite persecution but he did expect it (see 1 Timothy 3:12). Do we view our walk with Christ in the same manner?

4. Anchor your life in the Lord's sovereign grace (vv. 9-11). Grace is an eternal gift that puts us at odds with our sinful world. Comment on the following two statements. Agree or disagree?

a. We want grace without humility. We want grace without suffering. We want grace that results in happiness, health, and comfort. We want grace in return for faithfulness.

b. There is no entitlement regarding grace. We deserve torment in hell so anything better is a blessing (underserved) from the mercy and goodness of our Lord.

Verses 13-18

5. Paul says to "guard the good deposit entrusted in you" (v. 14). To guard means to protect by keeping careful watch. How can the spiritual disciplines help you and I guard the Word of God? Why is it critical that the Holy Spirit assist us?

6. In verses 15-18 we see examples of some who have endured well and others who have not. How are you enduring? Are you "refreshing" others in the Lord? How? Describe.

Pray

- For faith that is unashamed.
- For the willingness to suffer for our Lord.
- For God's grace to suffice in all areas of my life.
- For my life to be used to "refresh" others in the Lord.