

## “WORD: Rightly Handling the Truth of God” (2 Timothy 4:1-8)

For the week of March 5, 2017

### Remembering Spiritual Disciplines

Evangelism is a spiritual discipline. Evangelism is communicating the gospel. Relating the essential elements of God’s salvation through Jesus Christ is evangelizing. Evangelism occurs when the words of the gospel are spoken, written, recorded, and delivered to one person or to a crowd.

- What do Luke 24:27, John 20:21 and 1 Peter 2:9 say about evangelism and God’s people?
- Christian researcher George Barna says that most Christians who witness come away feeling like failures. Since they don’t like to fail, they redirect their efforts into spiritual activities in which they are more likely to be successful. Have you found this to be true? Why or why not?

### Big Picture of the Passage

Verses 1-4 are Paul’s commands to Timothy on how to continue leading the church in Ephesus. Verses 5-8 reflect Paul’s life in ministry as it was rapidly closing. It is literally Paul’s epitaph.

1. Paul had a huge influence upon Timothy. Who has been influential in your life over the years? Which words or actions of that person or persons are permanently printed in your mind?

### Verse 1

2. Paul really is driving home the importance of this commission in this verse. He charges Timothy in front of God and Jesus, who will one day judge us all. This charge summons *all* believers, not just pastors. Read Matthew 16:27, 1 Peter 4:5 and 1 John 2:28 and discuss their relationship to verse 1.

### Verse 2

3. There are five commands listed in this verse that we are to apply with “great patience and careful instruction.” They are:
  - Preach the Word
  - Be ready in season and out of season
  - Reprove
  - Rebuke
  - Exhort

Discuss the importance of each command with “great patience and careful instruction.” Are you successfully applying these charges to who you are currently

discipling? Some of us might be over ambitious about correcting and rebuking and some of us don't do it at all. What are the dangers of each side?

#### **Verses 3-4**

4. Let's define some of the phrases Paul mentions.
  - What is "sound" teaching? How can you determine that what you are hearing/reading is or is not sound teaching? What is your responsibility to speak to others who are hearing teaching that is not sound?
  - What is meant by the phrase "having itching ears"?
  - Paul warns that people will "wander off into myths." What are some of the myths today?
  - How does having a discipleship relationship with others help in guarding against these poor choices?

#### **Verse 5**

5. Read James 1:19-20. Why is it important to keep your cool when your feathers get ruffled by people or circumstances? Paul's charge is to keep our head in all situations. For example, considering the political divide in our country, why is this part of the charge so crucial for us as believers?

#### **Verses 6-7**

6. Paul confidently states that he had faithfully fulfilled his calling. Looking at the entirety of Paul's life, how was he able to write with such confidence? With 2 Corinthians 5:10 in mind, are you ready to write a similar letter with the same confidence? Why or why not? Discuss in your group.

#### **Verse 8**

7. As Paul wraps up this passage, he is looking forward to his reward in heaven. "All who have loved his appearing" refers to all believers who set their heart on the return of Christ. Do you hope for Christ's return? Why? Finally, who is on your heart to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior? List them and as a group pray for them.

#### **Pray**

Pray that as you help others to believe in God's Word and to be motivated by His Word, that you do so in a manner that helps you to remain composed and prepared to endure suffering. Ask God to help you remember that you did not sign on for an easy life, but one with a purpose, a calling. God will help you focus! Continue to announce Jesus as your Lord in your actions and your words.