

Remembering the Spiritual Disciplines

Memorizing God's Word is a spiritual discipline. When Scripture is stored in your mind, it is available for the Holy Spirit to bring to your attention when you need it the most. Among the many benefits, memorization strengthens your faith. As a group read Proverbs 22:17-19. How does the passage apply to Scripture memorization? What benefits does the proverb provide? What is the reason for keeping Scripture "ready on your lips?" As a group, commit to memorizing Psalm 119:11 which says, "*I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*"

Big Picture of the Passage

In this passage Paul contrasts Timothy with the false teachers. Verses 14-19 reveal a contrast of the correct ministry of Timothy with the incorrect ministry of others acting as truth tellers. Verses 20-21 provide an illustration. List at least three ways you can resist false teaching and false teachers.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Now list three ways false teaching and teachers can lead you astray.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Discuss in your group how being in a healthy small group thwarts false teaching. Dig down further and discuss how a strong discipleship relationship (mentor – mentored) is a great counter to false teaching. Are you in a discipleship relationship today?

Verse 14

Who is the "them" that Paul refers to in this verse? Paul warns against quarreling about words; literally "word fights." He further states that the result "does no good" or "is of no value." Using word fights was a known characteristic of false teachers in Ephesus.

1. How do you know when a doctrine is worth fighting for and when you are merely wrangling about words?

2. Why is diligent studying of God's Word critical in answering the previous question?

Verses 15-16

Check out the order of Paul's commands to Timothy. Verse 14 commands the pastor to conduct a public ministry of proclaiming truth without word fights. Then in verses 15-16 he urges Timothy to pursue a private ministry of gaining personal mastery of truth while avoiding word fights. Simply preach and then practice what you preach!

3. Why is continual self-examination of your walk with the Lord important? What self-corrections have you done recently to become closer to the Lord? Why are the spiritual disciplines important in self-examination as well as self-correction?

4. Timothy and all of us are to handle the Word of truth accurately in all respects, including our conduct. What is the meaning of the following phrase: "Knowledge apart from practical living is meaningless?" Use Proverbs 3:6, 11:5 as a help on this question.

Note: So watch out for overweight nutritionists, chain-smoking physicians, attorneys serving a jail sentence, financial advisors who have declared bankruptcy, and a Christian who lives contrary to the Word of God

Verses 17-18

We met Hymenaeus previously in 1 Timothy 1:20, where Paul states he excommunicated him and Alexander. Now he has a new buddy, and they are working to spread a falsehood that the final resurrection, the resurrection of the living and the dead, had taken place spiritually for all believers.

5. How does this false teaching attack the reality of Jesus' physical resurrection?

6. Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-14 and discuss how the physical resurrection of believers is linked to Christ's resurrection.

Verses 19

7. Read John 10:14-15. The Lord knows who are his. Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? Are you 100% confident that you are His child? If not, talk with your leader or a pastor.

8. The second part is that those who claim to be the Lord's must demonstrate this by departing iniquity. What iniquities must we flee from? How does a discipleship relationship help hold us accountable in removing ourselves from iniquity?

Verses 20-21

9. In the final verses of our passage Paul uses the term "a great house" as a metaphor for the church. This highlights that the Christian community contains both noble and dishonorable vessels – both believers and false teachers. Read Matthew 13:24-30 as Jesus taught about the mixed nature of the church. What insight did you receive from this passage?

10. These verses allude to character. Why is character so important for a believer? Is there ever a time when competence outweighs character? Finally, does character affect competence? If so, how?

Pray

There are four important characteristics of our Lord: gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, and rich in love. *"But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate; slow to anger and abounding in love."* Nehemiah 9:17

Spend time praying over these four characteristics and that they may be evident in your life and other believers.