

THE CORE: Modeling Jesus Faithfullyⁱ 2 Timothy 2:1-13

INTRODUCTION:

Good morning, Church Family! It is so good to see you this morning. For those of you that are our guests, we are especially grateful to have you join us today. We'd love to connect with you. There are a couple of ways you can help us do that. One, feel free to text, anytime, the keyword TBCMP, which stands for Trinity Baptist Church Mt. Pleasant to the number 94-000. When you do, you'll be sent a link where you can share with us basic contact information. I will then look forward to following up with you this coming week. Or another way you can connect with us is by stopping by our information center located in the main lobby area under the banner "Hope is Here." We have a gift there for you as a way to say thanks for joining us today. It is the highlight of my week to visit with those of you that are our guests. We are thrilled you have joined us today.

SERIES OVERVIEW:

Last week, Pastor Jeff did an outstanding job kicking off a new teaching series that we are calling The Core. We are examining some of the core values of our church, the things that drive us to accomplish our mission, to see our vision come to fruition, and the fuel by which we are involved in the strategies of our church. Pastor Jeff talked to us about our desire to share the gospel relentlessly.

I really love that phrasing that our team came up with. When we do The Lord's work, when we share the gospel, we in turn anticipate resistance. There is an enemy that desires to keep people trapped in their sin and shame and the gospel is the remedy to that bondage. So, when we share the gospel, the enemy kicks into overdrive. But that's okay. Because Jesus has already won the victory and so we will not relent in our pursuit for all people to know the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the very thing that offers hope in our hopeless world.

Our second core value is, "Modeling Jesus Faithfully." That will be our topic this morning. So, I want to invite you to take your Bibles and turn with me to the New Testament book of 2 Timothy. We are going to be in chapter 2 this morning and focus in on verses 1 through 13. To Model Jesus faithfully, we must be strengthened by the Truth, invest the truth in others, and we must

endure in the Truth. That will serve as our outline this morning and then we will look at a couple of application points.

OPENING ILLUSTRATION: Kids Imitating Parents

I can remember when our boys were little, we got them bunk beds for their room. We purchased them from IKEA and had to put them together. Now, Cathy is someone that is gifted in putting things together, so by the time I made it home, the beds were almost completed. The only thing remaining was the slats that would hold the mattress. So, I started working on that.

The slats were 1 by 4s with plastic anchors on either side. So, I had a small hammer that I used to tap the anchors into the bed. Well, before I knew it, both of my boys had gone to their playroom and gotten their plastic tools. They were then using their hammers to tap in the slats that I had completed. It was truly a monkey see; monkey do kind of thing.

I can remember doing the same thing when I was a kid when my dad would mow the lawn. There is something powerful about modeling, isn't there? And when we think about our core value, it is vitally important that we seek to model The Lord Jesus to our world. Our passage of study this morning talks about this very thing.

BACKGROUND TEACHING:

2 Timothy is Paul writing to the young pastor, Timothy. Many scholars believe that Timothy was discouraged and feeling down about the work of ministry. As a result, Paul wanted to encourage him to remain faithful. That by remaining true, The Lord would use young Timothy in profound ways.

In chapter 2, Paul focuses on two main things: being strengthened in Christ and then passing on the truth of Christ to future generations. Paul then uses three analogies to reinforce Timothy's role. I think this passage perfectly paints the driving core value of modeling Jesus faithfully and the impact that has, not only on our lives, but on others as well. So, let's examine it as we look at qualities of a disciple that models Jesus.

MESSAGE:

The first quality of a disciple modeling Jesus is someone that is...

1) Living the Truth.

Look with me at verses 1 and 2 of 2 Timothy 2. ***1You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men.*** Let's stop right there for a moment.

Paul is saying that before you can model Jesus, before you can pass along the truth of who He is, you must first be strengthened in Him. The word translated as "strengthened" is a word that means to fill with power.ⁱⁱ Just like electricity doesn't have its full effect unless it passes through, we must be filled, strengthened, by the work of the Holy Spirit, not only in us, but also through us.ⁱⁱⁱ In other words, before we pass onto others, it must first do work in us.

Paul is saying, "Timothy, you have great and important work ahead of you. You are going to influence future generations. As a result, you have to be strengthened by grace that is in Jesus, The Truth." Here's the key that I know we all already know. Strength, power, to live the truth, comes in daily interaction with the Truth. And it is God's grace, through salvation, that we have the privilege to relate to God. Prior to grace, we were apart from God.

So, when we say that a relationship with Jesus is paramount, we are talking about daily living with Jesus. By the way, Jesus says of Himself that He is the Truth. So, quite literally, we are strengthened in our lives by way of daily time with Jesus. Jesus modeled this for us. In Mark 1:35, it says of Jesus that He, ***"35[Rose] very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed."*** If Jesus, God in the flesh, was dependent on daily time with The Father, how much more are you and I in need of such strengthening? Yes, we must pass on the truths of God to future generations, but it must first do its work in us.

Jesus in John 15:5 that says, ***"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."*** Modeling Jesus first requires living daily with Him.

Now, I mentioned earlier that Paul uses three examples to communicate the truths he is conveying to Timothy. I think two of those examples speak to the importance of first living the truth. The first two examples are of a soldier and an athlete. Look with me at verses 3-5 of 2 Timothy 2. ***3Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. 5An athlete is not crowned***

unless he competes according to the rules. Let's talk about these two examples and what they mean.

First, the soldier. Now, for us we understand the depiction of soldiers illuding to warfare. But here, the example Paul gives of the soldier isn't pertaining to battle. A key component to military personnel is disciplined obedience. It is about being subordinate to a commanding officer. There cannot be a weakening of resolve, skill or strength.^{iv} If there is, threats greatly increase. So, Paul is talking about being disciplined, well-trained, and focused on the mission.

He goes onto say that soldiers don't get distracted by civilian pursuits. In other words, the soldier is not driven by entertainment, politics, financial gain, or anything other than the mission. To be well trained and disciplined, we must surrender ourselves to the truths of God's Word.

Paul emphasizes this further in the example of the athlete. An athlete forfeits the prize if he does not complete according to the rules. In Paul's day, an athletic champion received an evergreen wreath. But that wreath can be taken away if it was discovered that they did not comply to the rules. In fact, there was a motto in that day that said, "No rules, no wreath."^v

Paul is saying that to model Jesus for the next generation, we have to first be trained, disciplined, and live according to His Word. We cannot compete or live by our own desires. We cannot conform to new age morality, reinvented Christianity, or feel-good gospels. The crown and victory are only awarded to those that live according to the rules, God's rules for Christian living.^{vi}

So, modeling Jesus faithfully means that we are first living by the truth. The second quality of a disciple modeling Jesus faithfully is...

2) Sharing the Truth.

We live the truth and then invest the truth in others. Look at verse 2 of 2 Timothy 2. ***2and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.***

Paul uses the word, "entrust." That word carries the meaning of a deposit, an investment, a feeding of food.^{vii} When we teach God's Word, and we feast on His truths, it is an investment that is expected to yield a return or a continuation.

Paul makes mention of 4 generations here. Paul to Timothy, to faithful men and women, to others also. This strategy has fueled Gospel advancement since the establishment of the Church. Really, we see this all the way back to the issuing of the Law. Parents are to teach God's Word to their children diligently.

This strategy is the lifeline of Christianity. And while God will certainly continue His work until Jesus returns, He will always raise up the faithful until that day, but until then, our faith is just one generation away from extinction. It is our job to walk in, understand, and communicate Biblical teachings. It will be the next generation's responsibility to do the same. But without us doing our part, the next generation will be unable to do theirs. Without us modeling Jesus faithfully, the next generation will see no need to model Jesus. This is why this is a core value of our church. We are to model Jesus faithfully.

Think about Timothy for just a moment. The letter he is reading, our text this morning, was God's Word, but not in biblical form yet. To him, it was a letter from his mentor, Paul. Now, it would be included in the cannon later on. But Timothy was dependent on Paul's personal interactions with him. He may have had early copy of the gospel accounts, the Old Testament, and whatever sermons were preached, but that's it. He didn't have podcasts, a New Testament, commentaries, or websites. So, modeling and mentorship was absolutely vital for Timothy.

Guess what, the same is true for us today. Because what young Timothys today need is personal mentoring, not just information. They need guidance and examples to follow.^{viii} That hasn't changed. So, the question is what is being modeled, and what is discipling the next generation? Is it God's Word, our lives, or someone on the other end of a tik tok video? Listen, beloved, discipling someone is the greatest blessing you can receive.^{ix}

I want to speak very practical for just a moment here. I hope you can see the intentionality of our church. We are investing in you. Did you know that? It is our desire to take the Scriptures, teach them faithfully, and entrust them to you. Now, we are doing that with a clear purpose, so that you will do the same for the next generation.

Let me share with you how we are seeing this take place in our church. As we continue to grow as a church, we are looking to move increasing numbers of people into a group. It is in a group that people are known, loved, and cared for.

But it is also in our Adult Bible Study Groups that we teach The Bible. It is an entrusting of God's Word to you. But in order for small groups to happen, we have taken 2 Timothy 2:2 seriously. We have entrusted God's Word to faithful people who are able to teach others. And we are constantly raising up new leaders to continue to that process.

This fall, we launched several new groups. But of those groups, 3 are what we call multiplications. Our strategy is to multiply small groups that have grown to be large so that they can continue to reach more people. 4 years ago, we launched a group out of our engaged and newly wed group. We started a parents of elementary age kids group. The leaders we tasked with that were nervous about leading that group. They felt inadequate and unprepared. But God has used that multiplication in a powerful way. That very group has now raised up 3 other young leaders and multiplied this fall.

That's not the only group that has happened in. Our parents of preschoolers group have now raised up a couple young leaders and we have multiplied that group. And what has guided the church in Timothy's day continues to guide our church today.

And listen, this is more than just a good Word in the Bible. It is the very thing that is driving our church. By God's grace, we have entrusted His Word to faithful folks. And by God's continued grace, those folks will entrust God's Word to others. So forth and so on until Jesus returns. This has to be more than just good words on the page of the Bible. It has to be our heartbeat!

So, the qualities of a disciple modeling Jesus is one that is living the truth and sharing the truth. Thirdly, it is someone that is...

3) Enduring in the Truth.

Let's pick back up in verse 6 and read through verse . *⁶It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. ⁷Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. ⁸Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, ⁹for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound!¹⁰Therefore **I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.***

¹¹The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with

him; ¹²if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; ¹³if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.

Serving Jesus, modeling Him, is hard work that requires commitment and faithfulness. That is the picture Paul paints here as he uses the example of a hard-working farmer. A farmer's job is one of constant perseverance. Early to rise, laborious work, late to return home, all the in the hopes that the ground might yield some fruit. The Christian life is not for wimps. It is a calling to hard work and dependence on God to provide the increase.

I mentioned earlier in this message that Timothy was likely discouraged in the work of ministry. So, Paul turns to the imagery of a hard-working farmer. And he says, in verse 6, that the farmer should have first share of the crops. That is a reward for their hard work. Paul is reminding Timothy that there is a reward for faithfulness to Jesus. I would say that there are two types of rewards that are given to those that labor in faithfulness to Jesus.

First, is seeing God bring about salvation. Paul says that he endures everything for the sake people getting saved. Listen, people come to faith in Jesus because of the faithful preaching of believers. Paul said in Romans 10:14 and 15, *"¹⁴How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?¹⁵And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"* Like good, hard-working farmers, we plant the seed of the gospel that it might lead others to salvation here and now.

But the other reward for faithful labor may not be given in this life, but certainly in the next. An eternal focus motivates us for faithfully serving here and now. Paul says, Timothy, remain faithful, man, be strong, stay the course, because verse 11, *"If we have died with him [endured with him], we will also live with him; ¹²if we endure, we will also reign with him."* We seek to model Jesus faithfully for the benefit of the next generation, but also for the benefit of heaven.

So, disciples of Jesus model Him by living the truth, sharing the truth and enduring in the truth.

APPLICATION:

In the time we have left, I want to make mention of a couple different application points for modeling Jesus faithfully. How can we be a people that model Jesus? First, ...

1) Leverage Your Area of Influence.

You and I leverage our areas of influence by considering the people we have the most influence on. Our family, our work, our friends, and our church. Mom and Dad, you must model Jesus for your kids. No one expects you to be perfect because you can't be. But you can take advantage of the resources we have provided you to be intentional in modeling Jesus for your family.

I believe the Biblical view of work is to be the best you can be so that you can leverage it for influencing others. Christians ought to be the hardest workers, the most successful, the smartest in the room, definitely the wisest. Why? Because that reflects who God is. We model Jesus in the marketplace by how we work and the excellence we pursue.

Influence your friends by talking about what is most important to you, your relationship with Jesus. Influence your church by being intentional in investing in others. You don't have to do this right now, but in your mind, I want you to take note of the people seated around you. Can I tell you something? They're not there by accident. They are there because they have something of benefit to you and you have something of benefit to them. Let's invest in one another, challenge one another, love one another, and serve one another.

We are to leverage our areas of influence. Secondly, ...

2) Live differently.

As a follower of Jesus, we are not just called to worship Him on Sunday, but to pick up our cross and follow Him on Mondays. Do non-believers see a difference in your life? You might be the only Jesus someone sees. And people are drawn to people that are joyful, encouraging, peaceful, and kind. Hey, that sounds like the fruits of the Spirit!

ILLUSTRATION: Tina Falcone

I'm going to close with a true story. When I was a Student Minister there was a girl that started coming to church with her friends. Her parents were not believers and she had never been to church before. She came a few times, and her friends were praying for her like crazy. Well, a few weeks later, she came to

an event we had and came forward to give her life to Christ. Her words to me were, "I have never heard the name Jesus before I started coming to church." Now, before you think this was in some crazy place like Oregon or Washington state, this was in Burleson, Texas. You know, Tina got saved and she's never gotten over it. She became an intern and she serves in her church to this day. And do you know what it was that drew her to her friends? They acted differently.

Here's what I learn from Tina's story. Never assume people know who Jesus is and never underestimate the power of living differently from the world. I think the temptation is to look as much like the world in hopes that we are accepted and then might listen to our message. But the truth is, the world is hungry for a different experience than what they are currently experiencing. Show them, by the way you live your life, that there is joy, hope, and life in Jesus.

CONCLUSION

As we close this morning, I want to ask you a question. Do you know Jesus as the Lord of your life? Have you been born again unto a relationship with Him?

The Bible says that we are all sinners and have fallen short of the glory of God. And our sin has brought a terrible circumstance upon us. We are dead in our trespasses and sin. But the good news is that while the wages of our sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus as Lord. All you have to do to be rescued from you sin is to turn to Jesus. Simply say, "Jesus, I'm a sinner. I turn from my sin and trust you and Lord of my life. Come and save me." That's it.

If you would like to make Jesus your Lord this morning, we will have elders at the front ready to receive you and visit with you about what it means to trust Jesus as Lord. Maybe you have questions about whether or not you've done that. Either way, you come this morning and we would love to visit with you about what it means to make Jesus Lord of your life.

Maybe others of you are here today and just need prayer for something. We would love to pray with you. This is what we call a time of response. It is a time for you to respond to the prompting of God upon your heart. You come this morning. Let's pray [PRAY].

ENDNOTES:

ⁱ Works consulted in preparation for this message: Walter L. Liefeld, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 & 2 Timothy*, Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1999; John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 2 Timothy*, Moody Press: Chicago, 1995; Steven J. Cole, "Lesson 9: Handing Off the Truth," article published by Bible.org, April 15, 2013, accessed online: <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-9-handing-truth-2-timothy-22>; Michael Youssef, "Never Give Up: Standing For The Truth," sermon published by Leading the Way, February 26, 2022, accessed online: <https://www.ltw.org/watch/teaching/series/never-give-up/part-3>; Church Smith, "Sermon Notes for 2 Timothy 2:1-13," published by Blue Letter Bible, accessed online: https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/smith_chuck/SermonNotes_2Ti/2Ti_2.cfm; Melanie Newton, "Lesson 4: The Hard Work of Faithfulness," 3 day study guide published by Bible.org, April 26, 2012, accessed online: <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-4-hard-work-faithfulness-2-timothy-21-13>; Skip Heitzig, "2 Timothy 1-2," sermon taught at Calvary Albuquerque, November 22, 1987, accessed online: <https://calvarynm.church/connectwithskip/teachings/#/series/124/sermon/1691>; Chip Ingram, "Becoming an Effective Disciple Maker, Part 2: Be Strong – Don't Be Distracted," published by Living on the Edge with Chip Ingram, 2022, accessed online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TiF_CGmt7-0.

ⁱⁱ Strong's Concordance, 1743, endunamoó.

ⁱⁱⁱ Adapted from Michael Youssef.

^{iv} Liefeld, pages 247-248.

^v Youssef.

^{vi} Taken from Michael Youssef's sermon.

^{vii} Strong's Concordance, 3908, paratithémi.

^{viii} Liefeld, page 254.

^{ix} Youssef.