

INTRODUCTION:

As you may remember from the last two weeks, we are discussing the 2020 Vision for Sappony. Key to this is thinking of ourselves as disciples. We previously noted that disciples of Christ ABIDE, CONNECT, and SHARE. The 5 G's of this, or the how, are GOD TIME, GATHER TIME, GROUP TIME, GIVE TIME, and GO TIME. And to make sure that I give proper credit, the 5G Life is adapted from the work of Robbie Symons. You also may remember that I pointed out that if each person at Sappony reached one person per year, we could reach all 7658 of the lost people in Sussex County in eight years. I'm going to continue to throw these facts at you.

Last week, of course we discussed that a true disciple ABIDES in Christ and Christ in him. We also discussed, if you recall, that this means that Christ should get the first and best of your time! We discussed that abiding in Christ means remaining in Him and receiving your strength and nourishment from Him. Today, we will see that a true disciple CONNECTS with other believers as we turn to our scripture this morning.

MAIN TEXT (2 Timothy 1:8-2:4)

BACKGROUND: Paul wrote his second letter to Timothy in about 67 A. D. while he was in prison in Rome under the persecution of Nero. Things were bad for Christians, and Paul knew that he was going to die soon, and according to Church Tradition, he was beheaded shortly after writing this letter. Paul was writing to his son in the faith, Timothy, whom he had taught and disciplined, and left in Ephesus to get the church going there. Particularly today, our passage talks about the requirement that Timothy must share what he has learned with those who will teach others. Today, we will note that DISCIPLES SHARE TRUTH WITH UNBELIEVERS,

DISCIPLES TEACH OTHER DISCIPLES, DISCIPLES HAVE THEIR PRIORITIES STRAIGHT, and that DISCIPLES ARE NOT ASHAMED.

PASSAGE OUTLINE:

1. DISCIPLES SHARE THE TRUTH WITH UNBELIEVERS
 - a. Without Compromise: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” We absolutely must be faithful to the gospel. People who accept a false gospel are not truly transformed.
 - b. Without Fail: (2 Tim 4:2) Proclaim the message; persist in it whether convenient or not; rebuke, correct, and encourage with great patience and teaching.
 - c. Without Delay: (Matt. 24:36) Jesus reminded us in scripture that no one knows the day or hour of His return. At that moment, it becomes too late to share the gospel with that lost friend, relative, or neighbor.
 - i. (Jonathan Edwards) The observation from the words that I would now insist upon is this.—“There is nothing that keeps wicked men at any one moment out of hell, but the mere pleasure of God.”—By the mere pleasure of God, I mean his sovereign pleasure, his arbitrary will, restrained by no obligation, hindered by no manner of difficulty, any more than if nothing else but God’s mere will had in the least degree, or in any respect whatsoever, any hand in the preservation of wicked men one moment.¹
 - d. Once we reach an unbeliever, and make him into a disciple, the next step then is to teach that disciple what it means to be a disciple.

¹ Jonathan Edwards, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*. July 8, 1741.
https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/edwards_jonathan/Sermons/Sinners.cfm

2. DISCIPLES TEACH OTHER DISCIPLES

- a. (2:2) And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.
 - i. **Commit to faithful men** (Anthropos). What we learn, we are to teach other disciples.
 - ii. The life of a disciple requires a significant investment of time and energy into others.
 - iii. What if you tried raising your children in one hour a week?
- b. **Who will be able to teach others also**
 - i. (2 Pet. 3:17-18) Therefore, dear friends, since you know this in advance, be on your guard, so that you are not led away by the error of lawless people and fall from your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity.
 - ii. By making committed disciples who are able to teach, we help to eliminate false doctrine and false teaching.
 - iii. This is also how we make the next generation of disciples. You have seen in the general public what happens in one generation of people not being disciplined.
- c. Who has God called us to teach to follow Jesus?
- d. This is more that about preventing the church from dying. It is more that even trying to grow a church. It is about making disciples to grow the kingdom of Christ! We must recognize this because Disciples must have their priorities straight.

3. DISCIPLES HAVE THEIR PRIORITIES STRAIGHT

- a. (2:3-4) Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in

the concerns of civilian life; he seeks to please the recruiter (the one who has chosen him to be a soldier).

- i. **Share in suffering:** Did you realize that we are not called to a life of Christian comfort and ease? Nowhere in scripture are we told to sit on our blessed assurances and take it easy. We are, however, commanded to “take up our cross”.
 - ii. You have to recognize that we are at war. As a soldier of Christ, at war against His enemy, that is where our focus must be. We cannot be tangled up in the temporary affairs of this life.
 - iii. We are commanded to make disciples. We are not commanded to build careers, get ahead financially, or even to be happy.
 - iv. Instead, we must seek to please the One who chose us!
 - v. By the way, no one has ever said from their deathbed that they wished they’d spent more time at work. Or watching TV. Or surfing the internet.
- b. If we recognize the war that we are in, we will engage in that battle instead of wasting the precious time that we have.
 - c. We will go on to see that not only do disciples share Christ with unbelievers, teach other disciples, and have their priorities straight, but they also are not ashamed.

4. DISCIPLES ARE NOT ASHAMED

- a. (1:8) So don’t be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, or of me His prisoner.
 - i. Do you know how I can tell that some people are ashamed of the gospel? They

- try to minimize it or make it sound not weird. Guess what? The gospel is weird.
- ii. Churches are so ashamed of the gospel that they are not calling sin what it is and de-emphasizing repentance, and cheapening grace.
 - iii. People are afraid of what the world will think of them for being a disciple of Christ.
- b. In Paul's day, you didn't want to identify as a disciple unless you were one, because the consequences were potentially fatal, so you had to be bold and be prepared to face the consequences.
- c. (Matthew 5:14-16) You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.
- i. If we are the light of the world, the natural implication is that the world is a dark place.
 - ii. (Eph. 5:8-11) For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the lord. Walk as children of light—for the fruit of the light results in all goodness, righteousness, and truth—discerning what is pleasing to the Lord. Don't participate in the fruitless works of darkness, but instead expose them.
 - 1. The light of the Lord, His Holy Spirit shining through us, exposes the works of darkness.
 - iii. City on a hill: Driving into El Paso at night.
 - iv. If you light a lamp and put it under a basket, the basket will suffocate the flame and the lamp will die.

- v. People who are ashamed of the light of Christ will endeavor to hide it. We are instead expected to shine.

CONCLUSION:

Remember that as disciples of Christ, we ABIDE, CONNECT, and SHARE. Particularly today, we are talking about sharing the gospel with unbelievers and sharing teaching with those who are believers. Now, I want to ask you the most important question of the day: Can you name one person today that is living for Christ because of you? If not, I would suggest that it is time to change that. Pray for your one, but also witness. Testify. Let your light shine.

Maybe you have not yet committed to Christ. Maybe up to this point, you have been unaware of your need to repent and turn your life over to Him. I am plainly telling you right now, in no uncertain terms, that if you do not follow Christ, you will be in hell for all eternity. But you can change that today. Who will start a new life in Christ today?