

STUDY GUIDE



CHURCH NAME

MULTIPLY: A STUDY IN 2 TIMOTHY
MULTIPLY COURAGEOUS MINISTRY
2 TIMOTHY 1:1-2:13
03/12/2017

MAIN POINT

It takes courage to be a disciple of Jesus who multiplies disciples.

INTRODUCE

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What is one physical or character attribute you know you inherited from your parents?

If you have children, what is one characteristic of yourself that you see in them right now?

All of us have inherited something from our parents. Most of these qualities are passed down unintentionally, simply by virtue of our relationship. But the pattern for discipleship, and therefore the completion of the Great Commission, is more intentional. In order to finish the Christian task, we must be willing to engage in this process of multiplication. Paul's charge to Timothy in this letter is not limited to a specific situation (as 1 Timothy was). Rather, Paul's charge for Timothy is for the rest of his life in ministry—the last word from a spiritual father. “Be strong . . . suffer hardship . . . remember Jesus Christ.” Those are the words of counsel to Timothy in a fallen world, in an imperfect church, facing many persecutions, and many dangers, as he lives and ministers. It takes courage to lead and courage to follow. These words are not only inspired words for a minister of the gospel, they were suitable for all those in the Ephesian church, and they are suitable words for us today, as we multiply courageous ministry.

READ AND REFLECT

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 2 TIMOTHY 1:1-7.

What do verses 2-4 tell us about Paul and Timothy's relationship?

Who did Timothy first learn about Christ from? Who set an example for him in how to follow Christ when he was young (v. 5)?

What do you think it means to “fan into flame the gift of God”? What does that mean with reference to our relationships with others?

In this letter, Paul wanted to continue discipling Timothy, a ministry Lois and Eunice had started long before Paul had visited their city. Paul began to build on their work of exhorting Timothy. Paul was reminding Timothy that it was time to add fuel and fan the coals of his ministry into an open flame by recalling the passion he had felt at his ordination into ministry and the presence of the Holy Spirit in his life. God's desire for His people is to demonstrate a strong, enduring lifestyle of faith, even if that genuine faith resembles glowing coals hidden beneath the ashes of long-past victories. Paul's challenge should encourage us to take seriously the influence we have over the people in our lives and to look for ways to actively point them to Christ.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 2 TIMOTHY 1:8-18.

In what way did Paul describe the gospel?

Why was Paul worried about shame? What kept Paul from being ashamed of the gospel? What keeps you from being ashamed?

Paul was afraid that Timothy and others would be ashamed of the testimony of Christ, and that they would be ashamed of Paul himself because he was in chains. Some may construe Paul's incarceration as a sign that he was giving up on the gospel, or that he did not believe that he needed to keep proclaiming the truth of Christ. Salvation is through Christ and so is the gospel, it was not about Paul.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 2 TIMOTHY 2:1-13.

If you've been mentored, what was that relationship like? If you haven't had a mentor, who has been a spiritual leader or example in your life?

How are you carrying on their legacy of multiplying gospel truths?

Timothy's ministry would play out much differently than Paul's, but Paul knew that no matter the scenario, remaining strong in faith was necessary. The more active we are in ministry, the more we realize the need for a source of strength outside of ourselves. Paul used multiple examples of endurance, but the common theme was discipline and sacrifice. The metaphors Paul used bring to mind words like loyalty, commitment, patience, labor, stamina, and selflessness. In each case, personal circumstances and comforts take a backseat to leadership and evangelism.

Why is our courageous ministry important for future generations?

Evaluate your passion for those who do not know Jesus. What are you willing to do for the sake of their salvation? What steps can be taken to endure hardship for their sake?

When we endure, we have the ability to share the gospel. At times we do not share our faith because we fear what others may think. We must remember what Paul says, that sharing the gospel is for the sake of their salvation, not our reputation.

Look again at verses 11-13. What were the incentives Paul focused on that allowed him to endure, regardless of circumstances?

How do the two promises (vv. 11-12) inspire you to courageously share your faith?

The notion of endurance presumes an active, courageous Christian life. No endurance or courage is necessary if we seclude ourselves from the world and don't spread the gospel. However, the calling to follow Jesus requires activity,

and thus, endurance. In this final trustworthy saying, Paul gives Timothy the incentive of enduring in faith to the end of our lives as he had modeled.

APPLY

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What is one area of your life in which you need a greater dependence on the strength and grace of Jesus to live out courageous ministry? How are you going to remind yourself of that need this week?

How are you following the pattern of Jesus and Paul right now in multiplying disciples?

PRAY

Pray that we would come to understand the biblical multiplication process for making disciples. As a group, pray that you would all be actively engaged in this process, continuing to depend on the grace of Christ, invest in the people of Christ, and repeat the pattern of Christ.

COMMENTARY

2 TIMOTHY 1:1–2:13

1:1. As Paul wrote, awaiting death, he reminded Timothy that the purpose of his apostleship had been to proclaim the gospel, the promise of life.

1:3-5. Paul and Timothy both had a heritage of faith. When Paul said he prayed for Timothy continually night and day, he used a common expression for continual prayer. Timothy was on his mind and in his prayers throughout each day.

1:6. The phrase keep ablaze the gift of God did not mean that Timothy had “let the fire go out.” It was a call to action lest sluggishness set in. The laying on of... hands probably refers to Timothy’s ordination (1Tim 4:14). This passage focuses on Paul’s part in the event while 1Tim 4:14 focuses on the involvement of the full group of elders.

1:7. Spirit here probably refers to the Holy Spirit. The Greek word translated fearfulness is used in extrabiblical literature to refer to a person who fled from battle. It is a strong term for cowardice. Boldness, not cowardice, is a mark of the Holy Spirit (Pr 28:1; Ac 4:31).

1:9-10. These verses summarize the gospel for which believers suffer. They serve as a reminder of the power of God on whom we rely. The use of exalted language suggests that Paul was also arguing that so glorious a message was worth suffering for.

1:12. The phrase these things refers to Paul’s imprisonment and impending death. He was confident that God would protect either the gospel (what has been entrusted to me) or his own soul (“what I have entrusted to Him”; lit “my entrustment”). Either way, it was this confidence in God that prevented Paul from being ashamed. His boldness came not from self-confidence but from God-confidence.

1:14. That good thing entrusted to you was the gospel.

1:15. Asia was the name of the Roman province in which Ephesus was located. Key people who could have supported Paul had failed to do so. We know nothing about Phygelus and Hermogenes. This highlights the bleak situation in which Paul found himself. Perhaps this is one reason why Timothy, the faithful one, was such a source of joy for Paul at this time.

1:16-18. Onesiphorus was also an example of faithfulness, in contrast to those who had abandoned Paul. Verse 18 is an expression of Paul’s desire that Onesiphorus persevere, continuing in faithfulness, not being pulled away by the false ways of others.

2:1. This verse is a continuation of the call to Spirit-empowered boldness which began in 1:6.

2:4-6. In these three analogies, Paul expounded the call to service and suffering. Verse 4 calls for single-minded desire to please God. Verse 5 declares that a person must obey God’s rules in order to succeed. Verse 6 encourages hard work by holding out the promise of blessing.

2:7. This verse is a call to contemplation of what has been written, not a promise of complete knowledge or understanding.

2:8. The phrase descended from David is a reminder of Jesus' messianic credentials.

2:11-13. The trustworthy statement moves from comfort to challenge and back to comfort. Verse 12 is a clear statement on the necessity of perseverance. As Jesus said, only the person who endures will be saved (Mt 10:22). Verse 13 is a reminder of God's preserving power and faithfulness. In this context, to deny Him envisions a more serious offense than being faithless. To "deny Him" envisions apostasy, whereas "faithless" refers to a lapse in trust, which is something every believer does at some point.