

The Long and the Short of It" (It's Time to Agree with God) Week 4

Sermon date 5/21/2017

MY STORY

- 1) What was your takeaway from last week's study?
- 2) Did you do anything with last week's four decisions: I will **start**, **stop**, **stay** and **go**; is so what?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) Upon reviewing your notes from Sunday's teaching, was there anything that caught your attention?

The Goal.

The last three weeks we discussed the fact that it's time to agree with God about who he says I am and who He says He is. We then looked at four areas in light of these thoughts. What do I need to **start**, what do I need to **stop**, where do I need to **stay** the course and where do I need to **go**? In the view of the main; idea it's time to agree with God we are going to look at close personal relationships. The average American claims to have two close personal friends this is down from six friends about 20 years ago. In the age of the internet when people are more "connected" than ever we can be more disconnected than ever. The goal is to help us see our need for Godly friends and do something about this need. We will be looking at Paul and Timothy for our example.

DIGGING DEEPER

Acts 16:1-3

Paul went first to Derbe and then to Lystra, where there was a young disciple named Timothy. His mother was a Jewish believer, but his father was a Greek.² Timothy was well thought of by the believers in Lystra and Iconium,³ so Paul wanted him to join them on their journeyⁱ

A Summary of Paul and Timothy from *The Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*

TIMOTHY Personal name meaning “honoring God.” Friend and trusted coworker of Paul. When Timothy was a child, his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois taught him the Scriptures (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15). A native of Lystra, he may have been converted on Paul’s first missionary journey (Acts 14:6–23). Paul referred to Timothy as his child in the faith (1 Cor. 4:17; 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2). This probably means that Paul was instrumental in Timothy’s conversion. When Paul came to Lystra on his second journey, Timothy was a disciple who was well respected by the believers (Acts 16:1–2). Paul asked Timothy to accompany him. Timothy’s father was a Greek, and Timothy had not been circumcised. Because they would be ministering to many Jews and because Timothy’s mother was Jewish, Paul had Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3). Timothy not only accompanied Paul but also was sent on many crucial missions by Paul (Acts 17:14–15; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4; Rom. 16:21; 1 Cor. 16:10; 2 Cor. 1:19; 1 Thess. 3:2, 6). For example, when Paul was unable to go to Corinth, he sent Timothy to represent Paul and his teachings (1 Cor. 4:17). Later when Paul was in prison, he sent Timothy to Philippi (Phil. 2:19). Paul felt that no one had any more compassion and commitment than Timothy (Phil. 2:20–22). So close were Paul and Timothy that both names are listed as the authors of six of Paul’s letters (2 Cor. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; Philem. 1). In addition, Paul wrote two letters to Timothy (1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2). As Paul’s ministry neared the end, he challenged Timothy to remain true to his calling (1 Tim. 1:18). As Paul faced death, he asked Timothy to come to be with him (2 Tim. 4:9). At some point in his life, Timothy was imprisoned, but he was releasedⁱⁱ

4) Who was Timothy's mentor?

5) Why was Paul and Timothy's relationship significant?

Proverbs 27:17 (NLT)

¹⁷ As iron sharpens iron,
so a friend sharpens a friend.ⁱ

6) How was Paul and Timothy's relationship a good example of this verse?

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 (NLT)

⁹Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. ¹⁰If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.

¹¹Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? ¹²A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.ⁱ

7) What is the main theme or idea of this passage and why is it important?

The main theme is having people who you can count on and close friendships you can turn to. This passage is about not going it alone.

8) Would it be accurate to describe Paul and Timothy's friendship like the one above?

9) Who do you have in your life that is like Paul? Someone who is further down the road in their spiritual journey.

TAKING IT HOME

In the previous verses, we discussed the importance of connection with someone further in their walk with Christ. Paul and Timothy shared this kind of friendship and we can assume Timothy as a young pastor did the same for others. Answer the following questions.

10) Have you ever found it hard to make close friends in the Church? If so why?

11) Do you have a mentor? If so what is that friendship like?

12) If you are further along in your walk do you mentor others? If so what is that friendship like?

If you struggled to answer the previous questions. Be encouraged, God made us to be in relationships with others and his desire for you is to have those close personal friends you can walk with.

13) Here is a challenge this week. Seek out someone who you would like to mentor you and ask them for coffee, or call your mentor if you already have one. Pray and ask God to bring the right person into your life. He will. Its time to **start, stay, or go** find friends following Jesus. Maybe it's time to **stop** an unhealthy relationship.

CHAIR TIME TOOL

This week read 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy and answer the following questions.

- 1) How did Paul view Timothy?
- 2) What is the tone and theme of his letters?
- 3) What does God want you to do with the friendships you have in your life?

ⁱ Tyndale House Publishers, [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2013), Ac 16:1–3.

ⁱⁱ Robert J. Dean, [“Timothy,”](#) ed. Chad Brand et al., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1597–1598.