

"The Long and the Short of It" (It's Time to Agree with God) Week 5

Sermon date 5/28/2017

MY STORY

- 1) What was your takeaway from last week's study?
- 2) Did you reach out to a close friend this week? If you didn't, what is stopping you from developing a new friendship?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) Upon reviewing your notes from Sunday's teaching, what caught your attention?

The Goal

This week we will be continuing with the idea of connection. We all need friendship for friendship's sake. This week we will be discussing the need to have a mentor. Also, we will be unpacking the need for us to make ourselves available to mentor others.

DIGGING DEEPER

Proverbs 13:20 (NLT)

²⁰Walk with the wise and become wise;
associate with fools and get in trouble.ⁱ

- 4) What does it mean to be wise?

Biblical wisdom refers to practical skills associated with understanding and living a successful lifeⁱⁱ

- 5) Why would walking with the wise make a person wise?
- 6) What type of relationship does Proverbs 13:20 describe?
Many times, we consider people who we look up to as mentors.
- 7) What happens when we associate with fools?

2 Timothy 3:10-11 (NLT)

¹⁰ But you, Timothy, certainly know what I teach, and how I live, and what my purpose in life is. You know my faith, my patience, my love, and my endurance. ¹¹ You know how much persecution and suffering I have endured. You know all about how I was persecuted in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra—but the Lord rescued me from all of it.ⁱ

8) What type of things did Paul model for Timothy?

Paul gave Timothy access to his life. He modeled his character through his strengths and weaknesses.

9) Who do you go to when you are looking for a model of character and why?

10) Who do you mentor?

SPECIAL NOTE ON BEING A MENTOR:

To mentor someone requires their permission. No one wants to have opinions forced on them. If they seek you out for wisdom and advice that is permission on their part. However, one of the greatest struggles in the Christian community is failure to create a safe space for people to share their struggle with sin without the fear of people trying to fix them. The best mentors share their personal experience, not theory. I share my personal walk with Christ, not just the theology I study.

11) Many times people feel unqualified to mentor someone. What were some of the things Paul shared with Timothy?

His life, his struggles, his teaching—what he learned.

TAKING IT HOME

1 Timothy 1:18-19 (NLT)

¹⁸ Timothy, my son, here are my instructions for you, based on the prophetic words spoken about you earlier. May they help you fight well in the Lord's battles. ¹⁹ Cling to your faith in Christ, and keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked.ⁱ

12) What type of advice is Paul giving to Timothy?

Paul is encouraging Timothy.

Encouragement means to add courage to or to strengthen. We live in a world today when people intentionally seek out clever ways to tear someone down. It is considered

sarcasm. To encourage someone requires a choice and looking for the things in a person's life worthy of encouragement.

- 13) What does it feel like to truly be encouraged?
- 14) Two Sunday's ago, Pastor Craig spoke about a low-grade discouragement common in people's lives. How is encouragement a healthy response to that?
- 15) What would our church be like if everyone looked for opportunities to encourage someone?
- 16) When was the last time you sought out someone for the sole purpose of encouraging them?

To encourage someone doesn't require special knowledge or experience. It only requires the willingness to look for the best in people and tell them what you see. Here are some examples: I really appreciate you setting up the coffee, thank you. I see you every Sunday handing me a church planner and I really appreciate your faithfulness and your smile. Hey, thanks for taking the time to lead our life group, you're awesome. (Shameless plug for you guys.)

Sometimes encouraging someone requires tact when there is real pain involved in their circumstances. Be careful not to give Christian platitudes, such as immediately quoting verses like, "All things work for good for those who love God and are called according to his purposes" (Romans 8:28). This verse is an absolute truth that I believe with all my being, BUT there is a time and a place for sharing it. When my friend just lost a baby, that was not the time. They needed my love and support in that moment, not for me to try to fix their pain. Healing is the job of the Holy Spirit, my job is friendship.

CHAIR TIME TOOL

Reread 1st and 2nd Timothy and answer the following questions.

- 17) Who mentors you?
- 18) Who do you share your life with?
- 19) Are you far enough along in your walk with Christ that you should be mentoring someone? Who can you schedule coffee with to encourage them?

ⁱ Tyndale House Publishers, [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2013), Pr 13:20.

ⁱⁱ Martin A. Shields, [“Wisdom,”](#) ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).