

Bible Studies for Life: July 9

Paul and Timothy • Acts 16:1-5; II Timothy 2:1-2, 3:10-12

By Don Hicks



Hicks

I
wa
nt
to
as
k
yo
u
a
fe
w
qu
es
ti
on
s
ab
ou
t
me
nt
or
in
g
th
at
so
me
ma

y
fi
nd
de
ep
an
d
ch
al
le
ng
in
g.
Do
yo
u
th
in
k
Je
su
s
co
ul
d
ma
ke
a
st
ro
ng
,
be
au
ti
fu
l,

an
d
fu
nc
ti
on
al
ki
tc
he
n
ta
bl
e
in
Jo
se
ph
's
ca
rp
en
te
r
sh
op
?
If
yo
u
wo
ul
d
an
sw
er
ye

s,
ho
w
di
d
th
e
ca
rp
en
te
r'
s
so
n
le
ar
n
to
ma
ke
th
at
ta
bl
e?

– Are there any similarities between apprenticeship in a trade and mentoring?

– Are there any similarities in apprenticeship, mentoring, and good, effective parenting?

– Can you find meaningful similarities in discipleship, mentoring, parenting, and vocational training?

Do you remember how Paul the Apostle identified his relationship with the young, malleable disciple we know as

Timothy? In II Timothy 2:1, Paul tells us: *So, my son, throw yourself into this work for Christ (MSG).*

The bolding of “my son” is mine to emphasize Paul’s love and close personal relationship with this young person he is discipling. It says “son” because Timothy was a boy and thus the allusion to a son, and not a girl/daughter. The Bible is trustworthy in every detail, totally honest, carefully accurate.

The deep, parent-child, loving relationship between Paul and Timothy is a key factor in the successful discipling example the Holy Spirit preserved for us to follow. Paul told Timothy exactly what he would be doing if he lived out Paul’s mentoring example: *What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (II Timothy 2:2 CSB).*

When Timothy applied these guidelines for choosing apostles, he would find effective future teachers. To accomplish this, Timothy had to search for an appropriate audience. II Timothy 2:2 tells us an appropriate audience from which to choose prospective disciples should include (1) those who are faithful men, and (2) who will be able to teach others.

Dr. Luke gives some help in how to find faithful people who will teach others. We find this help in the book of Acts in the account of how the Apostle Paul found the disciple Timothy. Paul went on to Derbe and Lystra, where there was a disciple named Timothy, the son of a believing Jewish woman, but his father was Greek.

One of the first keys that can help you find a prospect for a successful discipling adventure is to find someone who is the child of a believing parent. In Timothy’s case, Paul found a Christian person *who is the son of a believing Jewish woman (Acts 16:1 CSB).*

Another factor was Timothy’s reputation at FBC Lystra. This is

the way Luke tells us about Timothy's reputation among his fellow Christians: *The brothers and sisters at Lystra and Iconium spoke highly of him (Acts 16:2 CSB).*

Since our unit of study is titled, *Mentoring: Investing in Others*, perhaps we need to ask ourselves: Does Scripture show us that Paul believed Timothy was worthy of his investment?

The very next thing the New Testament says is: *Paul wanted Timothy to go with him (Acts 16:3a CSB).* As we grow in our walk with Lord, He most likely will call us to do something that would be done better by two than just one person.

Both the Old and New Testament stress the importance of God's people working together. Jesus often sent his disciples out two by two. The Old Testament clearly explains the advantages of God's people working together to accomplish His will and receive God's love, care, and victories.

This is the way the Holy Spirit led and inspired King Solomon to write: *Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their efforts. For if either falls, his companion can lift him up; but pity the one who falls without another to lift him up. Also, if two lie down together, they can keep warm; but how can one person alone keep warm? And if someone overpowers one person, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not easily broken (Ecclesiastes 4:9 CSB).*

Our key Scripture passage from Acts 16 closes: *So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers (Acts 16:5 CSB).*

Paul warned his son in the faith that not everything will be easy. He said, In fact, *all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (II Timothy 3:12 CSB).* Just before this warning, the Apostle Paul made this triumphant and encouraging statement to Timothy: *What persecutions I endured – and yet the Lord rescued me from them all (II Timothy 3:11b CSB).*

Hicks is missions director for Jasper Association in Bay Springs. He may be contacted at donaldwhicks@gmail.com.