

DEEP SIX STUDY

March 7th, 2021

Jesus in the Letters – “Advice from an Awesome Apostle”

MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS (You can view the full message on Facebook or at live.capecodchurch.com/live)

Opening: The “pastoral letters” (1 & 2 Timothy, Titus) are different from the majority of Paul’s letters because they were written not to churches, but to individuals. They contain Paul’s direct guidance and advice to two young pastors and protégés he had sent to lead churches in Ephesus and Crete. If we listen closely, we can glean important messages both for leaders and for followers today.

1. Get a Mentor...Be a Mentor (2 Timothy 1:1-8)

- Timothy was obviously Paul’s favorite pupil, someone he’d invested much time, care and teaching in. Paul was Timothy’s *mentor*, and as a true mentor he both praised and challenged Timothy toward even greater faithfulness, understanding and good works.
- A mentor wants something *for* you, not something from you. Mentors humbly give you what they know you need to succeed – even if that something is an occasional correction or challenge.
- One of the best ways to grow in your faith and as a person is to find a mentor who has successfully walked the path you’re on now. And one of the *other* best ways to grow in your faith is to become a mentor – humbly learning more and more so you can help guide your mentee.

2. Study Scripture with Conviction and Humility (2 Timothy 3:15-17)

- Paul teaches Timothy the importance of approaching Scripture with “convictional humility” – that is, with the *conviction of believers* that it is the inspired Word of God, yet with the *humility of learners* to recognize that we haven’t figured it all out – and may never figure it all out.
- “Text without context is pretext”; when we find ourselves cherry-picking verses to support our own beliefs, we are in great danger of misunderstanding Scripture – and of turning it into a weapon. Passages on slavery, women in ministry, creation and Bible translations are examples.
- If you’ve never had your mind changed somewhat after reading Scripture, if you’ve never been convicted of something as you read, you’re either not growing or you’re perfect. Without *convictional humility* we cannot grow in our faith.

3. Grab the Gospel and Don’t Let Go! (2 Timothy 1:13-14)

- Paul forcefully tells Timothy to “keep the main thing the main thing” – that is, to “guard the precious truth that has been entrusted to you” and don’t let debates about secondary issues derail the reason for his ministry: to preach the Gospel to the lost.
- As followers of Jesus, we must cling to the precious truth that is at the center of our faith: *that God, through his grace and mercy, has made forgiveness for sins available to all through Jesus Christ, his Son, who lived, died and rose again*. Secondary issues like our preferred music style and which Bible translation we use should *never* interfere with the spreading of that ultimate truth.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

These passages may provide additional insights related to the subject of this week's message. Verses from NLT unless otherwise noted.

Psalms 119:105; Proverbs 27:17 (NIV); Romans 1:16-17, 15:2-41; Corinthians 15:1-4; Hebrews 13:7

Videos of the Week: [1 Timothy](#) and [2 Timothy](#) by the Bible Project

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. As mentioned, the letters to Timothy and Titus were written from Paul to them as individuals – as opposed to the majority of Paul's letters that were written to whole churches. Do you think we should read and interpret them differently because of that? Why or why not?
2. Think of your personal experience with mentors – either as a mentor or mentee. Why is having (and being) a mentor so important as we navigate our way through life and faith?
3. Read 2 Timothy 3:15-17 again. As you read Scripture, do you often find that what you're reading "corrects and teaches" you? How and in what ways?
4. The message mentioned the idea of "redemptive movement" – that is, as we view the story of the Bible played out over centuries, God can be seen moving his people *gradually* toward his ideal for how we should live and treat each other. Why do you think he would do it that way (instead of, for example, just telling the ancient Israelites to abolish slavery completely and love their enemies)?
5. Read 2 Timothy 1:13-14 again. Paul tells Timothy to "guard the precious truth" (the Gospel). What's the danger he's charged with guarding the "precious truth" from? Is that still a threat today?
6. What does the posture of "convictional humility" look like in relation to the final point of "Grab the Gospel and Don't Let Go? Should we still have "humility as learners" when it comes to the Gospel?