

# How to Be a Timothy

## Passionate Servanthood Part 4

Philippians 2:22-24 6-12-2016

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Summary: Timothy was humble, teachable, available, reliable (tested and proved), and useful. He became that way through a mentoring relationship. The preaching of the Word won't have an effect on the hard, rocky, or weedy soil until someone gets down on the ground of that person's heart and does some gardening. This requires spiritual father-type relationships. Take advantage of teaching, apprentice, partner, and friendship relationships in the church to accomplish this. Your example is only as good as your exposure.

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**Philippians 2:19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also<sup>1</sup> may be cheered when I receive news about you. 20 I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. 21 For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. 22 But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. 23 I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. 24 And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.**

## Introduction

The title of the sermon today is *How to Be a Timothy*, and I'm dead serious about that "How to" part, because in last week's sermon we dealt with an area that is probably the most difficult aspect of the entire Christian life, namely, the emotions of godliness. When you are reading the Bible and it tells you to *behave* a certain way, that's hard enough. But when it tells you to *feel* a certain way - to have real joy over

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<sup>1</sup> Why does he say **also**? Also in addition to what? In addition to them getting news about Paul, which would have been the main purpose.

something or to weep over something or to have anxiety for people's spiritual progress, or to love God with all your heart, or to have deep affection for one another in the church – those are the hardest kinds of commands to obey. We have been studying through the book of Philippians and we are in a section here where Paul is showing us some examples for us to follow. But the examples are so high that we run the risk of being discouraged rather than inspired, so it is really important for us to have the “how to.” And that's where we will end up at the end of the sermon, but for now, let's finish looking at the example of Timothy.

Last week we saw the primary quality that made Timothy the only one fit for this ministry: selflessness. He got worked up about the spiritual needs of the people more than his own, temporal concerns. But spiritual anxiety wasn't his only quality. The rest of the paragraph shows us at least five others, and they all spring out of the foundational one, which is humility.

## Humble

Timothy was humble.

**Philippians 2:22 But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel.**

### Slaved in the Work

One way you see his humility was in his servant's heart. When Paul says **he served with me in the work**, the word for **served** literally means *to serve as a slave*. Literally, **he slaved ... in the work**. Timothy thought of himself as a slave. He understood Matthew 20:25 where Jesus said,

**Matthew 20:25 ... the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and ... exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave.**

Some men want to get up and preach, but they are not all that interested in serving. Ask them to get up on the platform and speak, and they are all over it. Ask them to fix a toilet, and suddenly they are really busy. There is a long line of men who have their eye on the glamorous aspects of the ministry, but they don't have a servant's heart. Some tasks are beneath them. Not Timothy. He took the posture of a slave – and also of a child.

### Served as a Child

Verse 22 says he worked with Paul **like a son with his father**. Again - humility. He thought of himself as being like a kid with his dad. Timothy was one of the most capable spiritual leaders *in the world*. Paul himself said there was no one else like him. He had an incredible resume, a huge amount of ministry experience, tremendous giftedness, his name was a household word in the church. Timothy was a big deal – in other people's eyes, but not in his own eyes. Even though Paul thought of him as a colleague, he didn't think of himself that way. He thought of himself as being like a little kid with his dad. He was humble, and out of that virtue came the next one – he was teachable.

## Teachable

This is one of the most important tests of humility in ministry: is the person teachable? So many men especially get so puffed up with pride that they aren't teachable. They might take a class, but all they do is just critique it. They can tell you all about what's wrong with this preacher, and that book, and this program, and that conference, but you rarely hear them talking about what they have been learning lately. Instead of thinking of themselves like a kid learning from his dad, they see themselves as everyone's father. You can tell by the way they interact with you that they think of themselves as being several levels

above your level. And they think they are being really humble because they are willing to give up some of their precious time to actually listen to someone like you. And so it is rare that anyone can teach them anything. The only people they can learn from are preachers or authors they have never met. Because they have found so many faults in all the ones they have met, that they can't learn from them anymore. Timothy was the opposite of that.

## Available

He was humble and he was teachable, as a result of that he was available.

### **19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy ... 20 I have no one else like him...**

Timothy was someone Paul "had." What does it mean that Paul had Timothy? It means Timothy was Paul's to send. He was at Paul's disposal – available.

## Timothy's Career

Let me give you a quick sketch of Timothy's ministry career. He grew up in Derbe, had an excellent reputation there. One day Paul comes into town, meets Timothy, and says, "How about you uproot yourself, leave your home town, leave all your family and friends, and travel with me? The downside is all the beatings and floggings, but the gospel needs to go out." Timothy says, "Ok," and went. Then Paul said, "Oh, one more thing – just so Jews aren't offended, it might help if you got circumcised.

"Ok."

So they go off to Berea, where there was a riot. The situation became so life-threatening, that the brothers told Paul, "You need to go – immediately." So Paul told Timothy, "I have to go because of the danger – why don't you stay here."

"Ok."

Timothy starts making some friends, getting to know some folks, then he gets word, "Paul wants you in Athens."

"Ok."

For the next two chapters they are on the move from place to place, and then in chapter 19 Paul says, "Timothy, I need someone to go to Macedonia."

"Ok."

In Romans 16 he is with Paul in Rome. In 1 Corinthians 4:17 Paul is sending him to Corinth. In 1 Thessalonians 3 Timothy is in Athens with Paul again, then Paul sends him to Thessalonica, then he returns to Athens. Later Paul sends him to Ephesus, which was a really tough assignment.

"Timothy, I want you to go and depose all the established, respected leaders, who are teaching false doctrine and get the church back on track – even though they are all a lot older than you – find a way to get it done."

"Ok."

In Hebrews 13 Timothy is in prison, about to be released, at which time he will be sent on his next assignment, to recipients of Hebrews. In the 25 times we see Timothy in the New Testament, every single time he is either on the move or staying in some unpleasant place somewhere doing some really hard work. We never see him making any plans for himself. He is always being told what to do, where to go and what to say. We never hear anything about his plans, his dreams or aspirations, his goals. Can you imagine that - the constant severing of relationships? Never owning more than you could carry with you? Constantly being uprooted, always on the go, always having to adapt to some new situation, countless hours of boring travel. That was his life. And so we're not really surprised when Paul says to the Philippians, "I don't have a single person here in Rome that I can send, except one." Guess who?

"Timothy, Phillipi."

"Ok."

It's like Timothy just had the word "available" stamped on his forehead.

## No Boundaries

If Timothy lived today, some counselor would tell him, “Timothy, you need to read a book about boundaries. You need to learn how to say no, and to set limits. There is a book with that title, *Boundaries*, and it’s all about how to protect yourself and keep yourself from being hurt or taken advantage of. And Christians have gobbled up that book by the millions. It is one of the very few books in history to be on the NY Times bestseller list after 23 years in print. People love the message of that book, because it is basically a book on how to live a selfish life looking out for your own interests ahead of others and disguise it as being Christian. The message of the book is, If someone hurts you, teach them a lesson.<sup>2</sup> And be careful not to love too much, otherwise you might get hurt.<sup>3</sup> Why did three million people buy that book? Because the situation today is exactly the same as it was in Paul’s day – everyone is looking out for their own interests above Christ’s.

But Timothy was the opposite of that. Just like Paul, instead of setting up boundaries, he poured out his life on the ground to minister to others. What an inspiration! It makes you want to go, get alone with the Lord somewhere and just tell him, “Lord, I’m available. Anytime, anywhere, any task – where you send me I will go. Give me a job; I’ll do it.” So often people struggle to figure out what their calling is, and in some cases, it may be that God hasn’t made their calling clear because there is still a question mark about their availability. They are waiting for God to say, “Your mission, should you choose to accept it...” But that’s not how God does it, because he is God, and we’re not. Usually he just waits for us to drop to our knees and say, “Lord, I’m available. Here I am, send me.”

## Tested/Reliable

So Timothy was humble and teachable and available – what else?

### 22 But you know that Timothy has proved himself

He had proven character. Suppose you overheard someone talking about you (someone you highly respect), and they say that you are a man/woman of character. That would make you feel good, right? Now imagine the same thing, except this time, instead of just saying “character,” he says that you are a person of *proven* character? What’s the difference in your mind? What does the word *proven* add? It means you’ve been through something, right? You have been tested in ministry, or you went through some major trial or hardship, and your godly character remained steady even in the heat of that ordeal.

I will confess to you that in some of the hardships we went through the past couple years, I was dismayed to find out that some areas where I thought I had pretty strong character, that character didn’t hold up as well as I thought it would in the fire. It is one thing to have the fruit of the Spirit in your life; it’s another thing to still have it when everything goes to pieces, or you’re being attacked, people are slandering you, or your whole life is being turned upside down. It’s one thing to seem to have character, it’s another to have tested, proven character.

There are some aspects of character that can’t even be observed without some kind of testing. That is why the Bible tells us to be so slow when it comes to picking out deacons and elders.

### 1 Timothy 5:22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands

### 1 Timothy 3:10 They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

It’s hard enough to find someone who exhibits all the character traits a leader needs to begin with, but to find someone who has those traits and has been tested, and they held up through the testing – that’s a lot harder.

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<sup>2</sup> P.36.

<sup>3</sup> P.37.

## Submitted to Testing

In fact, it's getting harder and harder to even find someone who is willing to be tested. This is also related to humility. You would be amazed to find out how many potential leaders, who seem as humble as they come, are insulted as soon as we talk about any kind of evaluation or testing process. And they get angry and leave the church. We've seen that over and over - it happened again just last week. Timothy wasn't like that. He submitted to whatever Paul required of him, and he passed all the tests with flying colors.

And so he went through fire after fire, and all the fire did was showcase his character even more clearly. And that meant a lot to Paul, because not long before Paul met Timothy, Paul had been disappointed by another young man who didn't do so well when things got hard. His name was Mark. Things got hard and Mark bailed. He was eventually restored after that failure, but at the time it happened, it was a real problem, because when you are in the middle of a major work, and a member of the team just walks away, that can cause serious problems. Now other people on the team who may not be gifted in that area have to step in and try to carry some of the load, and in doing that they have to neglect their area, and so it just weakens the whole ministry. But Timothy was tested and proven, and so he was reliable. It is hard to find someone like that.

### **Proverbs 20:6 Many a man claims to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?**

Paul finally found one, and his name was Timothy.

## Useful

So Timothy was humble, teachable, available, reliable – and one more: useful. Timothy was always the guy Paul wanted to send, because he was so useful. But that also made Paul reluctant to send him.

### **23 I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me.**

When does the problem exist? Right now. When do they need help? Now. When will Paul send Timothy? Later. Why? Because Paul needs him. All through the New Testament Paul keeps sending Timothy everywhere, and yet he always ends up back with Paul. That's because Paul would send him, then he would call for him to come back, because Paul needed him.

## The Best People are the Worst People

When something important needs to be done somewhere, the best people to send are always the worst people to send. They are the best candidates because they are most suited to the task, but for that very reason they are the worst ones to send, because it is so painful to lose them. They are needed there, but they are irreplaceable here.

The people who aren't doing much here probably won't be much help there either. There are some people who are eager to be sent, but they aren't doing the work where they are. Generally, God won't send you somewhere unless what you are already doing here is needed over there. Watch out for people who are planning on being useful once they get sent, or once they get a certain position in the church. Useful people are useful wherever they are.

### **Philemon 11 ... [Onesimus] has become useful both to you and to me.**

Timothy was the same way. So Paul wanted to send him ASAP, but couldn't quite yet because he still needed him for a little longer. No one was as useful to Paul as Timothy.

**1 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore I urge you to imitate me. 17 For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.**

Paul says, “I want you to be like me, so I’m sending him, because he’s exactly like me.”<sup>4</sup> Paul can trust Timothy with anything because Timothy had both character and competence. But for that reason, he kept calling Timothy back to help him.

## Ministry Partnership

No matter how gifted the leader, he’s going to be 10 times more effective if he has a Timothy. I had a Timothy once. My first youth pastor job, one of the students graduated, and then helped me lead the group as a sponsor. And the more he and I worked together, the more effective we became as a team. After I left that church in Illinois, I moved to Colorado and was hired as a youth pastor at a church in Canon City. And this guy moved out and lived in our home, and helped me in that ministry too. Just one little example of the kind of thing I’m talking about: One time we were about to pick teams for some game, and I said, “Ok, I’ll be one captain, and Dave, you’re the other one. I’ll pick first.” And I picked the worst athlete in the whole group. A kid who never got picked for anything. And Dave, who is one of the most competitive guys I know, with his first pick, chose the next worse athlete. And we worked our way up that way, so the teams were still balanced, but those kids that usually got humiliated were not humiliated, and the good athletes were picked last, which didn’t bother them because they already knew they were the best athletes. I remember that to this day, because I didn’t have to talk to him about it ahead of time, I had never mentioned the idea to him, I didn’t have to give him a glance or a signal or anything – I just picked that one kid and he instantly knew what I was doing and joined right in with it. Everything we did together in ministry was like that.

If we can develop Paul/Timothy type relationships in the church, we will increase our effectiveness by orders of magnitude. But it’s hard to do because our culture is so transient. And perseverance is in short supply. Our natural reaction is always to be like Mark, and just bail when things get hard. And so you rarely see those kinds of relationships in ministry where two people have worked together for so long that they can accomplish more in ministry as a team of two than 10 people working individually.

## Mentoring Relationships

Ok, so all of that is all a summary of Timothy’s character. He had spiritual anxiety that made him care more about the interests of others than his own. And he was humble, teachable, available, reliable, and useful. He had character, competence, and chemistry with the Apostle Paul. How did he get to be like that? We really need to answer that question because the last thing God wants is for us to hear this message and say, “Wow, Timothy was really amazing. Too bad I’m so lame,” and then walk out. The purpose of these examples is not for us to be defeated; it’s for us to be inspired. So if I find myself falling short of where I should be, how do I get from where I am now to where I need to be?

We already know that teaching is a key ingredient. That’s why we are all sitting here listening to a sermon. That’s essential, but one thing we learn from this passage is that there is more to learning than listening. If we really want to learn, we need to do two things: listen, and watch. God designed us to learn through imitation. The problem is, all these things we need to learn are not just external actions; they are heart issues. How can I learn that through watching? How am I supposed to watch someone’s heart? This

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<sup>4</sup> Someone might object: “Shouldn’t you be your own person? God made me unique, shouldn’t I embrace that instead of trying to be like someone else?” There is some imitation that is good, and other imitation that isn’t. A young guy hears Matt Chandler preach, and he’s so funny and people flock to him by the tens of thousands, and they think, “I want to be just like him.” So they try to imitate his style and his jokes and his personality. But it rarely works, because God made him different. A young preacher who tries to be like Matt Chandler by mimicking his personality and style is like a basketball player trying to be like Michael Jordan by shaving his head and sticking his tongue out when he makes a layup. You can improve as a basketball player by imitating Jordan’s skills, but not by imitating his style. You shouldn’t try to be like someone else with regard to personality, but one thing that’s always fair game to copy is godliness because that’s not a personality thing. If you see some aspect of godliness in a godly man or woman in the church, and you imitate that, you’re not becoming more like them. They didn’t originate that. They just copied it from Christ. So when you copy it, you’re not becoming like them; you’re becoming more like Christ.

is where relationships come in. The only way you can watch someone's heart is by having a close enough relationship with that person to really see what's going on inside them.

If we are going to get that second part of the great commission done - teaching people to obey everything Christ commanded, that's going to require relationships. Preaching the Word is absolutely essential, but by itself it's not enough because if my heart is weedy soil, or rocky soil, then it isn't going to do any good to just throw the seed of God's Word on me with a sermon. Someone is going to have to get down on the ground in my heart and start pulling up those weeds, and moving those rocks. Sometimes I'll teach a principle from God's Word, but there is someone who doesn't really get it because he doesn't understand. He needs someone to sit down with him and answer his questions and explain things in a different way. And there might be someone else who understands just fine, but he can't bring himself to accept it because there's a sin in his life that he's not ready to let go of. Someone else understands the principle in theory, but has no idea of how it applies in a practical way in his particular situation. Someone else understands how it applies, but he can't move forward because he is paralyzed with fear. Someone else is paralyzed with guilt, or anger, or unforgiveness, or laziness, or anxiety over temporal things, or he's overloaded with busyness and can't even take the time to think about it. All those kinds of things are the rocks and weeds in the soil that hinder the Word from growing and producing fruit. And so there is just a ton of gardening that needs to be done in the church in order for the teaching and preaching to take effect.

And that gardening requires various kinds of relationships. A lot of that takes place in the small groups. The kind of help you get in a small group is a lot more specific and targeted to your particular needs than a general sermon.

But for some things, we need help that's even more specific. We need individual, one-on-one help. You need a counselor, or a mentor. Or, to use Paul's terminology, you need a spiritual father or mother. You need a Paul/Timothy kind of relationship.

The way to grow spiritually is to be fed - nourished by the Word of God - that's our food and drink. Sermons are like the grocery store - all kinds of food set out on shelves. Your small group is like a family dinner, where someone took certain items off the shelves at the grocery store, put them together in a tasty, digestible meal, and set it out on plates in front of you. Counseling is like going to the doctor. Something's wrong - you're not digesting properly, and you need some very specific help. Mentoring is like having a personal trainer. Or to use the biblical image, it's like having a dad or mom that you can watch and see how they do things, and learn from their example over a long period of time. This is God's design for how we are to grow.

Titus 2 tells us what to teach to all the various demographic groups: men, women, young adults, seniors, etc. Listen to what it says about women.

**Titus 2:3 teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. 4 Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, 5 to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands.**

Does that sound to you like he has a classroom setting in mind mainly? Or does it sound to you more like mentoring? To me it sounds like mentoring, because if a particular woman is having trouble loving her husband or her children, I think in order to help her, you are going to have to get to know her. You need enough of a relationship with her to where you know why she's struggling in that area. You need to have the kind of relationship where you can suggest some things, and when they don't work, suggest some other things, and keep working with her until she can make some progress.

## Jesus

What do we see in Jesus' example? He preached to the multitudes. He also trained up a group of 72. But most of his time was devoted to the 12. Why did he appoint the 12?

Three reasons:

**Mark 3:14 He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons.**

We understand the second and third ones - to preach and to do miracles. But what about that first purpose?

**Mark 3:14 He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him...**

This went beyond just requiring them to show up at all of his sermons. The kind of training that Jesus wanted to give them required that they be with him. They needed to observe his reactions and his emotions and how he handled various things that came up.

**Mark 3:3 [Jesus] looked around at the people in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, he said...**

How did they know Jesus was angry and deeply distressed? He didn't say anything about being angry or distressed. Evidently, they could tell by the look on his face. And was that significant? Yeah – it was significant enough to be included on the pages of Holy Scripture. That anger and distress was part of what Jesus was teaching them, and in order for them to get it, they had to be with him. And you see that repeatedly.

**Mark 8:12 He sighed deeply...**

**Mark 14:33 ... he began to be deeply distressed and troubled.**

**John 11:33 When Jesus saw her weeping ... he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.**

Jesus wanted them to learn those things by watching him. There are some things that some people need to learn from you, or that you need to learn from someone else, that can only be learned by watching their emotional reactions right at the moment when something happens. That's not the sort of thing you can pick up from a book study or a video series on Tuesday nights at 6 o'clock.

## **Exposure**

God designed us to learn by imitation. And so if you are spiritually mature – or if God has called you to be a teacher, here's something for you to consider: your example only goes as far as your exposure. If you don't open up your life for people to see how you live, what good is your example going to do? Who is the person in this church who does the best with self-control? I don't know, but whoever it is, suppose that person mostly just keeps to himself/herself? They come to prayer group, but they never really say much about their life. They never have anyone over, they don't play kickball after church, they don't come to work day, they don't hang around other people in any context where anyone could observe their self-control. How can we imitate them?

Maybe God gave you the gift of giving. That's a strong area in your life, but nobody is learning anything from your example, because you always want to give your gifts anonymously. Jesus instructed us to never advertise our good deeds for the sake of showing off. But in the very same sermon he also commanded us to let our light shine before men so that they can see our good deeds. Never do it to show off, but do let people see your good deeds. What are the strongest areas of your character? Can the rest of us see it enough to imitate it? Can anyone see it from enough different angles, and observe it in enough different contexts to where we'll be able to get the hang of doing it ourselves just from watching you?

The elders have thought long and hard about whether there is some kind of program or system or way to organize this, so that there is an easy, systematic way for people who want one to find a mentor. So far we haven't come up with anything that sounds workable. So at least for now, what we're looking for is to put this in place not through a program, but by simply developing a culture that values this. Realize that it comes through relationships, and take advantage of whatever relationships you have to do it. Let me give you four examples.



## Leadership

If you are in a leadership position, whether you realize it or not, people are watching you. The more visible your role, the more people are watching. So if you are a ministry coordinator, or a small group leader, a deacon, an elder, a teacher, think beyond just your leadership role, and consider your responsibility to serve as an example of character. When you have an opportunity, expose your life to the people you are leading. Don't be a private person. Volunteer information about how you feel, and what you're thinking, and what your attitude is. Let the people you lead see into your heart as much as possible – even if you can't think of any specific reason why it might benefit them at that moment. Just be open in general, because we don't know what all other people need to learn.

## Apprenticeship

Another kind of relationship where this takes place is an apprenticeship. That's how Paul and Timothy started out. Paul took him on as an apprentice. Whatever ministry you are doing in the church, find someone who is teachable, and take them on as an apprentice. And unless you are the most immature person in the entire church, you should be able to find someone.

“But I'm fourth grade!”

Well, find a third-grader. Or find someone doing what you have a heart for and ask to be their apprentice.

It's good to always be training someone to do the ministry that you do in case the Lord calls you to do something else. But even apart from that, it's good for you to have an apprenticeship kind of relationship with someone, just for the sake of their spiritual growth. Because whatever time you spend with them showing them how to do the job, they are learning from your example – especially if you are open with your life.

## Partnership

Timothy started out as an apprentice, but later on became a partner. He got to the point where Paul needed Timothy just as much as Timothy needed Paul, and they served together, side-by-side as partners in ministry - even to the point of co-authoring books of the Bible together. People who are on an equal level with each other can still mentor each other like iron sharpening iron.

Think of your ministry. Is there any part of it that you could do in partnership with someone else? Maybe it would be more efficient for you to just do it yourself, and it would actually take more hours to try to do it in partnership with someone. But it's worth it just so you can have a mentoring relationship. Not only will your ministry benefit from another set of spiritual gifts, but both of you will be exposed to each other's lives and learn from each other.

## Friendship

Be available to someone in this church who needs a friend. Involve yourself with social activities for that purpose. Go up and join in the kickball game after church each week. Sign up with that golfing group. If you are going fishing, as long as you're going, why not call someone up in the church and see if they want to come along? Going out to eat? Going to a movie? A bike ride? Invite someone along.

“I can't get out - I have a house full of kids.”

Call up another young mom in the church and say, “How about if I pile my kids in the van and come over to your house, and all our kids can play outside while I help you clean your house, then next week you can bring your kids over and help me organize my basement.” And maybe when it's all said and done, nothing really gets cleaned or organized, but in the process, one of you learns something from the other one about how to love your children more just by watching.

So I'm not going to tell you, "Go out there, and find your Timothy, and find your Paul, and start meeting once a week, and go through this curriculum..." Maybe someday I'll be telling you that, but what I'm telling you now is to just consider the value of iron on iron. So if you are already going to read a book, think of someone else who might also enjoy that book and ask him, "How about we both read this book, and when we're done maybe we can get together and talk it over?"

## **Conclusion: Spiritual Fathers**

In Mark 10, Jesus was talking about the fact that some people, when they become Christians, lose their family. And Jesus' answer to that was to say, don't worry about losing your father or mother, because when you come into the church, you will gain 100 fathers and 100 mothers. Some of you are very disappointed in the natural father you had, or never had, but instead of lamenting that, realize – Jesus promised that there are lots of men in the church who can be a spiritual father to you, and lots of women who can be a spiritual mother to you. Pick one! And again, I'm not saying it has to be some formal arrangement, or some weird thing: "Hey, will you be my dad?" Let's just take advantage of the various kinds of relationships that are available in the church and be intentional about using those relationships to mentor one another. This is God's design.

**Benediction: Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."**

## **Application Questions (James 1:25)**

- 1) Which of the virtues of Timothy (spiritual anxiety, humility, teachability, availability, reliability, usefulness) are the top two you would like to increase in?
- 2) Can you think of a person who is strong in one of those areas whom you would like to imitate?
- 3) Which kind of relationship would be the best way for you to mentor someone else or be mentored? (leadership, apprenticeship, partnership, friendship)
- 4) Are there any steps you believe God would have you take to make your heart more exposed so people can learn from your example?