

INTRO TO 2 TIMOTHY

REFLECTING & CATCHING UP

(Take time to reflect and/or catch up with one another)

- What was something memorable for you from this summer?
- What are you looking forward to in this new fall season?

WHAT THIS BOOK IS ABOUT

(If in a group, read aloud)

This book is written by the Apostle Paul. Paul was formerly a zealous Jew who persecuted followers of Christ, but after experiencing God's presence on a road outside Damascus, he then became a passionate follower of Jesus. Paul would go on to write the majority of our New Testament. And 2 Timothy is Paul's last letter. At the time of the letter's writing, Paul is imprisoned for sharing the Gospel. He is in a dark, dismal jail under Roman guard. Paul tells us he is "wearing chains" like a "criminal" (2 Tim 1:16; 2:9). He also shares that he has been deserted in this solitary place (4:9-10) and longs for company, even as his inevitable death appears to be on the horizon (4:6).

Despite this, Paul knows he has carried out his God-given mission and awaits the heavenly reward to come (4:7-8). Thus, even though he has finished his work, he now uses these last words to pass the torch on to his son in the faith, Timothy (1:2).

As you work your way through this book over the next eight weeks, take time considering both perspectives of the letter: that of the writer (Paul) and the original reader (Timothy). The two share a real relationship of Gospel-centered discipleship. In that, what does Paul choose to highlight to his disciple? And how might we, as readers like Timothy, take these words to heart and then live them out in faith and truth? May you be blessed in this journey through God's Word. May you "fan into flame the gift of God" (1:6). And as God pours into you more and more, may you "guard the good deposit" that will be entrusted to you (1:14).

THE PAUL & TIMOTHY RELATIONSHIP

(Search the Scriptures on your own or together to learn the story of Paul and Timothy)

- Look at **Acts 16:1-5**. This is the first time Paul meets Timothy. What do you notice about Timothy's upbringing? How might the faith differences between his mother and father have shaped Timothy's relationship with Paul?
- Turn now to **Acts 17:10-15**. How are the Bereans characterized? The writer tells us Jews and Greeks were ministered to here. How was Timothy uniquely suited as a bridge between these two cultures? Also, as Paul leaves Timothy behind in Berea, what impact might staying in Berea have had on Timothy? How could their character have potentially rubbed off on him and shaped his ministry going forward?

INTRO TO 2 TIMOTHY (CONT.)

THE PAUL & TIMOTHY RELATIONSHIP (CONTINUED)

- We see Paul continue to send Timothy into communities blossoming in the good news of the Gospel. He served as the right hand of Paul and was entrusted with much.

We see this as well in Paul's letters to the Corinthians and Philippians.

Briefly look at **1 Corinthians 4:17, 16:10, & Philippians 2:19-23**.

What stands out here?

- Our last stop in looking to the biblical context behind Paul and Timothy's relationship is Paul's first letter to his disciple: the book of **1 Timothy**. Here we will look at just a few highlights of the letter to unpack a few more key characteristics:

- Timothy is urged to advance God's work against opposition. He tells Timothy the goal is "love", which comes from a "pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (**1 Tim 1:3-5**).

- Timothy is told not to let anyone look down on him because of his youthfulness, but to instead set an example for the believers (**1 Tim 4:12**).

- Timothy is called to guard what has been entrusted to his care (**1 Tim 6:20**) while he "fights the good fight of faith (**1 Tim 6:12**). He is to flee from evil and instead pursue "righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness" (**1 Tim 6:11**).

YOUR OWN STORY

- What challenged and/or encouraged you through Paul's words to/about Timothy?

- Have you ever felt equipped and empowered by someone in the faith? Have you provided that for someone else? If so, write and/or share about that discipleship relationship.

- Where do you see God's hand at work throughout these Scriptures? How is God central to the Paul & Timothy discipleship relationship?