

Introducing Project 20 : Week 1 (17th Sept)

PEOPLE MATTER

Connect groups are about pastoral care and discipleship. Take the time to also telephone and text regularly. **Please try make sure you take time during the month to visit at least one or two members of your group, pop in for coffee.** If you notice people are missing from church on Sundays please do make sure they are followed up. No one should be sick and without help and prayer in Net Church, no one should be struggling without support and care in Net Church. Sometimes it is the little things that we do, like a phone call, that make a huge difference.

When you ring before the study could you please encourage each person to:

- bring a Bible to each study
- Bring a notebook for the series.

The notebook is for them to jot down thoughts or questions when they read the passage before the night of the study. And to bring along to the study so that they can write down revelations, teaching etc. Connect groups are all about growth:

- Personal growth – if we are hungry we feed ourselves. As disciples we must get into the habit of studying the Bible for ourselves, feeding on spiritual food.
- Church growth – growing together as a body. That is why we will be studying the passages at the same time as a church.

THE FORMAT

To get the best out of the study please read Each study's assigned reading notes well in advance of the group and make lots of notes. Make sure you understand the answers to the questions listed. Also feel free to add other scriptures in to aid discussion in the question time:

1. Introduce the topic
2. Read the bible passage listed (ask someone else in the group to encourage group interaction).
3. Watch the media clip – make sure you have watched it plenty of times in advance of the study and think of all the potential questions that will arise from this. The link is listed and you can watch this on TV's, large laptops etc just make sure the sound is loud and you have tested the set up before the group arrive. So that during the actual connect group you just turn and push play.
4. Interaction Discussion. We have listed questions for you to promote as much discussion as possible. Interaction is key. Bring in some scriptures to stimulate discussion at different points, and encourage as many group members as possible to participate (don't allow 1-2 to dominate the answers, encourage even the quieter ones to bring forward ideas etc). You may need to think of some additional questions around the verse.
5. Always bring in the biblical viewpoint so that people fully understand what the verses ARE saying (eg what does blessed actually mean for instance).
6. As the discussion comes to a close ask the application questions in section 5 for each person to take a moment and reflect on what this study means for them personally. Make sure you have pens available for people to complete this section. This makes the study living and active.
7. Finally finish in prayer. Ask if there are any prayer needs and also pray into the study and its outworking.

LEADERS GUIDE – INTRODUCTION TO 1 TIMOTHY (WEEK 1 17TH SEPT)

Read the study notes Appendix A supplied on page 3 below and familiarise yourself with the background, dates of when Paul wrote this book AND who Timothy was.

1. Introduce the topic.

Over the next year we are going to be unpacking 20 verses in 1 Timothy chapter 1. Get yourself a journal and get ready to go deep into one chapter with so much in it! Before we watch the video ask the group **‘What do you know about Timothy?’** See how much people THEN WATCH...

2. Watch the video – Week 1

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1mVi49dpP7yYHTGB96l8SC5o21zaFke1R>

3. Read

Have spare Bibles available but this intro does not have a specific passage.

4. Ask and discuss the questions (encourage as much group participation as possible)

Questions:

What details strike you about Timothy’s background – where he was from, family, culture etc?
Leader’s note: Appendix A below will help you be informed.

Read Acts 14:6-22 – This is where Timothy’s mother, grandmother and Timothy became Christians – in Lystra on Paul’s first missionary journey. Read Acts 16:1-2 – 3-4 years have since passed so how important do you believe verse 2 was to Paul and why?

Timothy was a strong disciple – what key ingredients make us grow strong in our faith in Jesus?
Leader’s Note: Appendix B will aid here. You could hand this out to your group after the study.

Paul had many ‘sons’ in the faith - Philemon 1:10, Titus 1:4, 1 Cor 4:14-15, 2 Timothy 2:1. How important is it to have spiritual fathers and mothers and what does that relationship look like?

We are all called to ‘make disciples’ as commanded by Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20. We should therefore all have ‘Timothy’s’ we are mentoring. How important is this to you?

Timothy is appointed the Pastor of the Ephesian Church, what topics does Paul cover in 1 Timothy for Timothy to address and are these issues relevant in the church today?
Leaders’s Note: Appendix C will aid you here.

Timothy proved faithful and consistent as a disciple – to lead anything in your life eg marriage, parenting, career, ministries etc what other qualities do we need as disciples? (leader’s note: have Appendix B to hand to help this discussion).

Timothy was around 30 years of age when Paul was writing 1 Timothy – do you think age matters in what we do for Jesus in the church?

Hand out Appendix A to the group – ask them to each read this before the next study so they really know who Timothy was. Next time we will start with verse 1!

5. Over to you... (personal application)

- What did you find challenging in this study?
- Is there anything the Holy Spirit is highlighting that you need to work on after this study?
- Make a decision – let’s not just be those who hear God’s word but those who live it out. Make a decision based on this study of how you are going to walk this teaching out personally.
- We are going to spend the next few months unpacking exactly what 1 Timothy chapter one teaches us. Read the whole chapter before the next study and get yourself a journal ready for questions and thoughts as we study it.

Appendix A

Who was Timothy - Article by Melanie Newton

Timothy was a teenager when he met Paul. His family lived in Lystra (modern day Turkey) so he was a Galatian. His father was a Greek man; we know nothing of his faith. But, Timothy's mum and grandmother were faithful Jewish women who taught the Old Testament scriptures to this boy they loved so much (Acts 16:1-2 Timothy 1:5). As the women heard Paul preach, they believed in Jesus, and so did Timothy. Timothy may have seen Paul heal a lame man in his town. That would have been exciting! He may also have watched as an angry mob threw stones at Paul and left him for dead (Acts 14:8-20). Yet, he also knew Paul survived. When Paul came back to Lystra a couple of years later on his second journey, Paul invited Timothy to travel with him.

Timothy helped Paul to establish churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea (Acts 16:1 – 17:14). When Paul left Berea to go to Athens he left Timothy and Silas behind, but later sent word for them to join him (Acts 17:13-15). Timothy was sent to Thessalonica to strengthen the faith of believers there (1 Thessalonians 3:1-2).

Timothy was a trustworthy friend who carried money collected by the Philippian church to care for Paul's needs in Corinth. During the 3 years Paul was in Ephesus teaching them about the amazing power of God, Timothy was there, too. When Paul was imprisoned in Rome for two years, Timothy was right alongside him much of the time unselfishly taking care of Paul's needs. By now, Timothy was a young man of about 30 who for at least 13 years had been learning how to teach about Jesus and serve God's people well as he watched Paul do it. Paul thought of Timothy not only as a very faithful friend but also as his spiritual son.

After Paul's release from prison in Rome, Timothy and Paul travelled to visit friends in the churches they had founded. When they got to Ephesus, Paul recognized some men in the church were teaching error about Jesus saying that Jesus could not have been a man and God at the same time. Paul wanted to go on to visit his friends in Macedonia, but he didn't want to leave the Ephesian church in turmoil. So, he left Timothy to teach truth to the church there while Paul went on to Macedonia. As an "apostolic representative, Timothy had the authority to order worship (1 Timothy 2:1-15) and appoint elders and deacons (1 Timothy 3:1-3). Paul thought he'd get back to Ephesus soon, but that didn't happen. He was concerned about what was going on in Ephesus, so he wrote Timothy the letter called 1st Timothy around AD 63-64 from Rome or Macedonia.

Six of Paul's letters include Timothy in the greetings. The most tender and moving of Paul's letters was his last one to Timothy. He was a prisoner in a Roman dungeon when he wrote 2 Timothy, approximately AD 67. He knew he had a short time to live, so the letter is his spiritual last will and testament – his "dying wish" – to encourage Timothy and to request that Timothy join him during his final days of imprisonment (2 Timothy 1:4; 4:9, 21). According to Foxe's Book of Martyrs, which was written several centuries later (originally published in 1563), Timothy remained in Ephesus until AD 97. During a pagan celebration of a feast called "Catagogian," Timothy severely reproved the people in the procession for their ridiculous idolatry. This antagonized the partygoers who beat him with clubs "in so dreadful a manner that he died of the injuries two days later."

Appendix B

“FOLLOW ME: 8 QUALITIES OF A TRUE DISCIPLE OF CHRIST”

Bible Reference: MATTHEW 16:24-27

When Jesus gave His famous, and arguably His most challenging, exhortation to His disciples in Matthew 16, verses 24-27, He outlined what it would look like in a person's life if they chose to follow Him. Pastor Peter Wetendorf from Conrad, Montana, would refer to this type of person as a true disciple and below he lists eight qualities that Jesus defines during His call in the passage.

1. DOESN'T LIVE FOR THEMSELVES

The first quality that Jesus mentions is that a true disciple “denies himself” (v. 24). If someone wants to follow Jesus, they must have a willingness to surrender personal hopes, dreams, and desires. You can not follow Christ if you come to Him with your own agenda.

2. INDULGES IN SACRIFICIAL LIVING

Secondly, Jesus tells us that true disciples “take up their cross” (v. 24). Jesus knew that He had come to eventually take up His own cross in order to save sinners, but He also knew that if someone wanted to follow Him, then they must follow Him into a life of sacrificing their own lives in order to enter into Christ's life. A true disciple, then, is someone who consistently lives with the mindset that the true life they have in Christ is worth the loss of the earthly life they had without Him.

3. SINCERELY FOLLOWS CHRIST

As true disciples answer Jesus' call to lay themselves and their own lives down, they also must step up and answer the call to pledge their allegiance to Christ—“follow me” (v. 24). Once true disciples have made the decision to surrender themselves and live sacrificially, their hearts are then ready to obediently follow Christ.

4. COMMITS TO GOD'S INVERTED VIEW OF LIFE

Anyone who wants to be a true disciple of Jesus must realize that most of His ways and plans for our lives are counterintuitive to how people would naturally live their lives without His intervention. For instance, Jesus says in the text that if you seek self-preservation, you will perish, but if you are willing to surrender your right to self-preserve in light of who Jesus is, then He will be the one to preserve you and give you true life (v. 25). This way of thinking is very inverted to the way we naturally think, so a true disciple must commit himself to believing Jesus' words to be true.

5. INVESTS IN THINGS THAT MATTER

Every quality Jesus has listed so far has provided a radical calling for people who want to be true disciples, and Jesus does not slow down in verse 26 when He challenges those would-be disciples to consider His claim that there is literally nothing in the world, nor the sum of any or all things in the world, that compares to the value of the salvation of a human soul. True disciples have an ability to discern the difference in value between material

possessions and the salvation of human souls and they then invest all that they have accordingly.

6. PERCEIVES DECEPTION AS REAL

Similar to the previous quality, Jesus mentions further in verse 26 that it is possible for people to “give” away (or “forfeit” gaining) salvation for their soul in order to receive something they perceive as greater than salvation. But what can be of more worth than salvation? The true disciple of Jesus Christ realizes that there are forces at work that are trying to deceive them as to what is most valuable in life and, because they are true disciples, they are able to stand strong in the face of deceptive temptations.

7. LIVES IN VIEW OF CHRIST’S RETURN

In a world full of brokenness, evil, and suffering, all people, whether they follow Christ or not, are looking for the light of hope to come from somewhere or someone. Those who are not true disciples of Jesus Christ will spend their days searching for hope in many things, even good things at times, but eventually the hopes that all things on earth promise to us fade. The true disciple, however, knows that they have a hope that will prove its power on the day it is revealed—the hope of Christ’s return. True disciples have a quality of hopefulness because they know their Savior is coming back.

8. EXPECTS TO BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE

One of the ways people who live under the power of deception justify their life and decisions is by claiming that they will not be held accountable by a moral superior at the end of their life. True disciples of Jesus Christ, however, believe that not only is “the Son of Man is going to come” (v. 27), but when He does he will “repay each person according to what He has done” (v. 27).

Written by Peter Wetendorf

Appendix C – Major Themes of 1 Timothy

Ch. 1

Greeting and establishing authority
Instructions For Timothy In Ephesus
Paul's Thankfulness For The Mercy Shown To Him
Paul's Charge To Timothy

Ch. 2

Instructions To Pray For All People
Instructions For Women
Instructions To Men And Women

Ch. 3

Qualifications For Overseers
Qualifications For Deacons
The Mystery Of Godliness Described

Ch. 4

The Coming Apostasy
The Good Servant Of Christ
Instructions For Ministry

Ch. 5

Instructions About Widows
Honoring Worthy Elders And Dealing With Sinners
The Support Of Widows

Ch. 6

Slaves And Masters
False Teachers And The Love Of Money
Renewed Charge To Timothy
Instructions To The Rich
Final Charge
False Teachers And True Contentment