

The Faithful Pastor - 2 Timothy 2:1-13

So this is the third of my three weeks. You've almost survived. Thank you for your kindness to me.

The first week I pointed to The Faithful Savior. Last week I pointed to The Faithful Few. This week I want to point to another evidence of God's grace... The Faithful Pastor.

Alistair Begg wrote, "To risk reputation and affection for the truth's sake is so demanding that to do it constantly you will need a degree of moral principle that only the Spirit of God can work in you. Do not turn your back like a coward, but play the man. Follow boldly in your Master's steps, for He has made this rough journey before you."

The call to serve The Chief Shepherd of Jesus' church as an under-shepherd is the call to an impossible life, made possible by the Sovereign One.

The Scripture makes it clear we have an enemy who prowls like a lion seeking those he might devour. Every follower of Jesus is a target, but those who lead find the concentration of the battle elevated.

Part of the danger of even talking about our enemy is that some will make more of our enemy than our Savior. We face a defeated foe. He was taken down at the cross. When we believe the Truth God has given us, and trust Christ's power... the enemy barks, but he has no teeth. He has no power, except the power we give him. When we sin, make no mistake, volunteer. He may set the trap, but we climb in. We climb in when we fail to believe what is true and walk in that way.

Jesus said...

ON SCREEN John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Do you believe that? Will the abundant life be found dabbling in sin (fools believe they can dabble) or pursuing life in the grace of Jesus?

We can sometimes foolishly think we will gain an advantage... Gain something for our life, that God has intended to withhold. Just like the temptation the devil set in front of Adam and Eve. "God is holding something back from you." And, their was a measure of truth... God was holding back evil. A major part of our growth in godliness and joy comes as God cares for us and guards us as His Church. We're here not to provide what every one WANTS, but to guide into a life of TRUTH and GRACE.

I thank God whom I serve (Timothy, "fan into flame the gift of God to lead his church")

There will be conflict, opposition, false teaching.

You then...

2 Timothy 2:1-13. You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. 3 Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. 5 An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. 6 It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. 7 Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

8 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, 9 for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! 10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. 11 The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him;

12 if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us;

13 if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.

The Apostle Paul the grizzled veteran missionary, church planter, pastor, apostle, elder is writing to Timothy, who has proven his faithfulness through the fires of ministry.

I see two primary instructions to Timothy in regard to being a faithful pastor here. I've wrapped them up in two words in the hope they will be easy to remember. Endure, which may not sound that encouraging, but it is. Endure, and, Entrust. The call of the gospel to actively invest in others who will steward the gospel and pass it

Endure

(On Screen Not Read) 2 Timothy 2:1, 8-9

1 You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus...

8 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, 9 for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! 10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

The call to endure is NOT, suck it up tough it out. Try harder. This is the call to GOSPEL GRACE. To be favored by God. To live the abundant life knowing God has given us far more than we could ever earn or deserve.

Gospel people grow in the awareness that we live in the lavish grace of God.

We have two living children, Our son is almost 42 years old. Our daughter is 20. My wife and I have raised two “only children”. There

aren't many people in that club... for some very good reasons. We adopted Moriah. My niece is my daughters birth mother. I could tell you stories all day about what God has done through that young lady. Just one here...

Moriah was probably about four years old. She loved to be read to and with enough of the right energy it really didn't matter what I read. So for probably a year, I read an abbreviated version of Grudem's systematic theology to her. Then we would finish with a make believe story. Her favorite, I can hear her ask me... "Daddy tell me how Mickey and Minny fell in love." It was always different and loaded with biblical principles.

We had been reading about mercy and grace. Moriah had engaged in some offense worth of punishment. I am a firm believer in consistency so we were preparing for the execution, when Moriah looked at me with those huge brown eyes. "Daddy I need some grace."

Teachable moment right here... So, I said honey do you understand what you did was wrong. She nodded her head. You know your momma and I have told you not to do that and you deserve to be punished? She nodded her head. Because you are guilty, what you need is MERCY. Mercy is when the punishment we deserve is withheld. So, honey I want you to treasure mercy so, as long as you know what you did was wrong, you confess and turn from that, I'm going to give you mercy and you won't be punished.

Then Moriah asked, "So what is grace?" I said, "Grace is when we're given good things we don't deserve. This is grace... let's go get ice cream." While we were eating our ice cream Moriah looked at me and said, "Daddy, I like grace."

You then my child be strengthened by grace. Delight in the lavish grace of God and the beauty of grace will yield the humility to share in suffering.

Suffering can be something of a “gas gauge” for our life of grace. When the grace of God is the fuel of our life suffering reveals the joy of the Lord.

How does that happen? By remembering Jesus. Jesus who overcame death and the grave, risen from the dead. Humiliated on the cross and honored by the Father of all. Exalted One, offspring of David who is the Central Being of all the activity of God. The living Word revealed on every page of the written word. Remember Jesus. Even if we are in chains the Word of God is never bound.

Remember Jesus when you come to the table of communion and as the contents of that cup wash down your throat remember the blood of Jesus poured out... FOR YOU. As the bread is taken into your body and absorbed remember He is the bread of life given... FOR YOU. As you worship don't just sing and pray and give and serve. Sing, and pray, and give and serve the One who IS YOUR LIFE. If He is your life and He invites us into suffering we will share in suffering as a good soldier.

No matter what may bind us, the Word of God is never bound. Never without its effect. Remember Jesus as you delight in the Word day by day. Remember Jesus.

(On Screen Not Read) 1 Timothy 2:4-7 No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. 5 An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. 6 It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. 7 Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

Is it fair to say that war, games, and farming reveal Jesus? A soldier who is not prepared, equipped, supported, strategized and strategic will not last long in battle.

Is it even possible to play a game without rules? Yet many seem to want the Christian life that way.

Any gardeners here? Who eats your best tomatoes? And, you should. As you eat delight in the first fruits of life in Jesus! Then worship by giving your first fruits to God!

Endure in grace. The abundant life made ours by the gospel. Endure and Entrust.

Entrust

(Read) 2 Timothy 2:1-2 You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

I want to ask you to identify the gospel generations in this passage. Paul. Timothy. Faithful men. Others. This is gospel multiplication. **This is the methodology of Jesus.** Jesus taught the masses at various points but he called the twelve to “be with him”.

Paul invested in Timothy who was to entrust to faithful men who would teach others.

There are a lot of good things we can be involved in, in ministry, but this is the one thing we **MUST** be involved in.

(If possible please put on the screen with 2 Tim 2:1-2, if not a separate screen is fine)

Matthew 28:18-20. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of

the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Bill Hull says, "Success in the church should be measured not by how many disciples are made, but by how many disciples are making other disciples."

Here are some key steps...

Identifying faithful people

Investing the faithful word into those faithful people

Creating space and coaching for emerging leaders to flourish

Entrusting leadership to those emerging leaders

Leaders have been given to the church according to Eph 4:11ff “for the equipping of the saints.”

Do you believe Brian is the man God has called to serve this church?
You need to encourage him.

There is one kinda “bottom-line” question I always asked when I would evaluate potential elder/ministry leaders; “Would I encourage my son/daughter to follow this person?”

If the answer is yes, we can move ahead. If the answer is no I need to ask if there is something I can do that would help them grow (do they want to).

I would commend this strategy of multiplying leaders as THE STRATEGY for training in the church and your mission strategy as well. This is exactly WHY I am investing this season of my life with Training Leaders International. Our (FCC) mission strategy was aimed at strengthening the local church by building up local leaders who pour into others.

As a church you should be looking for opportunities to deploy the gifted teachers among you to strengthen the church in parts of the world teaching is needed. (I can help!)

The work of the kingdom is built on faithful teaching of the Word of God. We are a kingdom built on TRUTH.

You should celebrate the gift you have been given in Brian and the staff here. But, the entire ministry team vocational and non-vocational is critical to a thriving gospel advancing church.

Let me suggest this... write a note to Brian. Thank him for faithfully teaching the Word, for investing in faithful teachers who will teach others. Commit to pray for him and the elders here.

Then give yourself to be one of the faithful ones who will teach others also.

Some will push back, saying “I’m not a teacher.” Yes you are the only real question is the setting. One on one. Small group. Relationship. Speaking as you serve. Classroom.

Another hesitation (excuse) will be “I don’t have time”. You have exactly as much time as the Lord wants you to have. The only real question is priority. You Baby Boomers in the room who have more time flexibility, and more resource should chart a new course for how you invest this season of your life.

Neil Cole said it this way... *“Ultimately each church will be evaluated by only one thing, its disciples.*

It does not matter how good your praise, preaching, programs or property are. If your disciples are passive, needy, consumeristic, and not moving in the direction of gospel obedience, your church is not a good church.”

From all I've seen in the last three weeks, from what I know of Brian, and Tim, and Kevin, and George, this is a good church. Be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

I'd like to close reading 2 Tim 2:11-13 together. This moves from comfort to challenge, back to comfort.

READ 2 Timothy 2:11-13 *The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him;*
12 if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us;
13 if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.

Often people will get hung up on the “what if I deny him” challenge. If YOU take center stage you will always be afraid. Where is our hope in this? If we have died with him we will also live with him. If we are faithless, he remains faithful. We're encouraged again by one of the several things God can not do. He can not deny himself.

Jesus is our life. He is enough.

Pray.

(Please put this web address on the screen) Faithful-leaders.com

Thank FBC for allowing me to represent them in training leaders around the world. Please pray for me.

The Faithful Pastor - 2 Timothy 2:1-13

Endure

If living in grace is something of a “fuel gauge” for suffering, how prepared am I?

Entrust

Identify two-three people you would want your child to follow. Speak to them. Tell them. Encourage them. Be one of them!