

# THE ROCK COMMUNITY CHURCH

## 2 Timothy 2:1-7

### “Driven by the Mission”

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23:45

So if you haven't been here with us, we're in the middle of a series. So welcome to the middle of the movie. I hope you can jump in and kind of figure out where we're at, but we're gonna be looking at 2 Timothy, chapter two this week. So if you brought your Bible, go ahead and make your way to 2 Timothy, chapter two.

24:01

We're also gonna have those verses on the screens. Also, also, also, if you want to follow along in a physical copy, there should be one either underneath of your seat or maybe one of the ones in front of you that you can grab and follow along in that as well.

24:17

But as we are kind of making our way there, just to kind of make sure we're all on the same page, we're picking up in the middle of the story. And so what we've been looking at over the last several weeks is a letter, 2 Timothy, written by a man named Paul, as he is sitting in prison in the sewers of Rome.

24:35

He's sitting in this prison cell and he's writing this letter to a young pastor that he knows, that he loves, named Timothy. And Timothy is working, leading a church in a town called

Ephesus, you may have heard of, that the book of Ephesians was based on that city and the church in that city as well.

24:54

But Paul is writing this letter talking about what it means to live out the Christian life in a faithful way. Now that means that there's some things that are kind of required of us and so over the most significant portion of chapter one in this letter, we see Paul several different ways, encouraging Timothy to stand for the gospel and to stand with him in suffering for the gospel.

25:20

Now that doesn't necessarily sound appealing at first glance, but for Timothy to suffer for the gospel is Paul's invitation to him and there's a reason for that. It's because the suffering that we're going to endure, that Timothy's going to endure is a temporary thing and that by doing so, by enduring that temporary pain, that temporary difficulty, Paul encourages Timothy, he tells him it's gonna be worth it because Jesus is with you in it, Jesus will give you strength through it and Jesus is waiting for you on the other side of it and so we have this encouragement that we've seen so far and this week we're gonna pick up the same conversation and in verses one through seven, we see Paul compare gospel ministry, this work that he's inviting Timothy to be a part of, he compares gospel ministry to the life of three different individuals, the life of a soldier, the life of an athlete and the life of a farmer.

26:21

And it's because God strengthens believers by his grace as he's gonna talk about here in our passage, that they're able to endure, that they're able to persevere like he's been talking about last week and we've got these three analogies that point out how Paul is saying, Timothy, you can endure like a good soldier, like an athlete and like a farmer.

26:43

First, Timothy is encouraged to stand firm like a soldier. Now, soldiers, he says in the passage that we're gonna look at that he says that they're willing to suffer, that they don't get entangled, tied up with civilian pursuits because their goal is to please their leader.

27:02

Their goal is to follow orders because the mission is their primary goal. Second, he compares Christians to athletes who must discipline themselves, who must train themselves, who must work hard at doing what they want to be doing, what they want to succeed at, whatever that sport or event is, because they compete for a crown according to the rules.

27:26

Finally, he compares Christians to hardworking farmers who will receive the reward for their labor that we receive the first share of the crops. And so we're gonna see how God will use focused, disciplined, hard work of Christians to accomplish his mission.

27:43

So we're gonna read from 2 Timothy chapter two. I wanna invite you to follow along in your copy or on the screens as we read 2 Timothy chapter two, verses one through seven together. You can follow along.

27:55

We start in verse one where Paul says, you then, my child, Timothy, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus. What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

28:10

Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. For no soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.

28:25

And it is the hardworking farmer who ought to have the first share of his crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. This is the word of the Lord. Would you pray with me?

28:37

God, we thank you for your word. God, we thank you that Paul in his wisdom and his inspiration as you gave him these words. God, we thank you that he penned these words to Timothy, to encourage Timothy, to invite Timothy to be a part of the gospel mission.

28:55

God, there is a much bigger mission than just our happiness, just our ways that we fill our days. And God, you have invited us to be a part of your work in the world. That's an incredible blessing to us.

29:09

God, that's something that is just mind blowing to consider the fact that the God of the universe, that you spoke and the universe flew out into existence. God, that you choose to use people like us to accomplish your work in the world.

29:26

God, as we consider Paul's encouragement to Timothy, his invitation to work hard and to be diligent and to train ourselves for the work at hand. God, we pray that you would help us to do the same thing.

29:39

God, that you would help us to be prepared and to work hard and to be diligent, to be single-minded about doing what you have invited us and commanded us to do. And so we give this time to you, we pray that you would speak.

29:52

God, we pray that you would convict our hearts if we need to be convicted. We pray that you would give us understanding if we need to understand. And God, most importantly,

that you would give us hearts that are prepared to receive what you have for us this morning.

30:04

So we give this time to you and we pray that you would use it for your work. It's in Jesus' name we pray, amen. All right, well as we dive in, the first thing that we see in this passage, he's talking all about the mission, the Christian mission all throughout this, but the first thing that we see is the fact that Christians are strengthened for the mission.

30:25

In verses one and two, he talks about being strengthened for the mission. And he says at the very beginning in verse one, he says, you then my child be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

30:36

Now there's a command there, right? He tells Timothy, be strengthened. Paul is calling Timothy to something that is beyond what he can do in his own strength though, right? Because last week and the few weeks previous and the words that Paul had just written to Timothy, he's inviting him to do something that most people don't wanna do.

30:59

Hey, just come along and suffer with me. I know I'm locked in jail in this terrible hole underneath of Rome, but join me. And by the way, have joy while you do it. It just doesn't make a lot of sense, right?

31:13

That's certainly not something that most of us are gonna raise our hand if we ask for volunteers, right? So we've got this situation that Paul is inviting Timothy, join me, stand with me as I stand for Christ.

31:26

And he's inviting Timothy to do something that is beyond what Timothy is naturally inclined to do or strengthened to do. going to require some divine power in order for him to be able to live this out and to carry out his ministry.

31:42

But I want you to notice something, because verse one, it doesn't say Timothy be strong. If it were to say Timothy be strong, that would be a command for Timothy to follow through on, right? But what does it say?

31:55

It says be strengthened. There's a different tense to that, right? If Paul tells Timothy be strong, that depends on Timothy's strength. But Paul is telling Timothy be strengthened. That strengthening is in a passive voice.

32:09

That means that there's someone else who is going to come along and who is going to strengthen Timothy. That strength doesn't come from within him. It comes from outside of him and is placed on Timothy as he is strengthened.

32:23

Timothy's not told to just toughen up and buck up his shoulders and tough it out. Paul's telling Timothy be strong because God is going to strengthen you. God is going to strengthen you. God is going to enable you to complete the work that he has given you to do, that he is inviting you to be a part of.

32:44

This is the same thing that Paul says very similarly in 2 Corinthians chapter three. 2 Corinthians three, verse five, Paul says, not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but he says our sufficiency is from God.

33:03

So how is Timothy to be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus? How is he able to do that? He's strengthened by humbly realizing that his strength doesn't come from him. He's strengthened by humbly realizing that we are not strong because we are strong.

33:21

We are strong because he is strong. And you know what? There's great news for us because we hear somebody like Paul say that and we go, what will Paul was strong? Paul had his life together. Paul had it all figured out, but you know what?

33:36

There's some profound truth that our theology needs to shape our understanding and our practical lives here because the same power that lived in Paul, the same power that Pastor Mike just talked about, Peter preaching at Pentecost, that powerful message where thousands of people came to faith that day, that same power was given to them by the Holy Spirit.

33:59

And that same Holy Spirit lives in us. If we have given our lives to Jesus, if we have received his offer of salvation, the Bible tells us that all who are in the family of faith, all who belong in faith to Jesus Christ and to God, all of us are empowered and equipped with that strength of the Holy Spirit.

34:19

So we're not strong because we're strong. We're strong because he is strong. And the same God that we see working all throughout Scripture and doing these incredible things, that is the power that is available to us if we simply tap into it.

34:33

Don't be strong. He says, be strengthened. If God has called you to something, if God's called you to his work, you need to realize it's not something that you do, something that he does through you.

34:48

We're just so long for the ride. That doesn't mean that we don't have work to do. We certainly have work to do. But if he calls you to it, he's going to provide the strength for you to do it in his grace, that word grace, right?

34:58

It means undeserved favor, unmerited favor. We don't deserve God to empower us and make us capable of doing what he calls us to do, but he does. It's an incredible blessing for us. So I guess the question becomes, what work has God called you to?

35:17

What work has God called us collectively to? Well, good news. I'm glad you're asking that question because Paul answers it in verse two, right? Verse two, he says, what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses and trust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

35:33

What Paul is doing here in this verse, he's describing, perhaps in different terms than Jesus uses, but he's describing the Christian mission in 2 Timothy chapter two, verse two, because he's describing taking the good news that you've been given and giving it to somebody else.

35:51

That sounds familiar, right? That's the same mission that Jesus, right before he left the earth, he said, go to disciples, take what I have given to you and make disciples who would go and would baptize and would teach all that I've commanded you.

36:05

Go and take what you've been given and give it away. Give it to somebody else because I didn't just come for a few. Came so that he would build an entire people for himself. He



came so that he would have opportunity for the world to know who he is and to declare his goodness.

36:27

I want you to look at verse two right in our passage, 2 Timothy 2:2. I want you to notice something in this verse because we read this verse and it says, what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses and trust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

36:43

I want you to look and tell me how many spiritual generations of people are in that verse because we see Paul saying, hey, what I have received, what I have given to you, Timothy. So Paul is kind of the dad or the granddad or whatever in this picture, right?

37:01

He says, what I have received, I've given to you, Timothy. All right, so he's living it out and giving it to Timothy. But he also says, what I have given to you, entrust it to faithful men. Give it away, give it to somebody else.

37:19

So we have, Timothy's now supposed to have others underneath of him who he would pass this along to. We're creating a chain at this point, right? Paul to Timothy, to those who Timothy would entrust with the gospel, but then we actually have a fourth generation as well.

37:35

The fourth generation, Timothy's disciples, disciples. It says entrust these things to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. The idea is this is a running line that goes generation after spiritual generation after spiritual generation.

37:52

This isn't something that a few are called and commanded and invited to do. This is something that all of us are invited to do. This is the reason why Christians have existed throughout history, why we can look at a man like Jesus Christ who lived thousands of years ago and realize that this isn't just because somebody Googled him one day.

38:14

This is because generation after generation have been telling the story of who Jesus is, have been proclaiming the good news of the message of salvation that comes through a death on the cross. It's because person after person after person has handed this down.

38:33

The goal is to pass that message on and it's the goal that Jesus gave to the apostles. It's the goal that Paul is giving to Timothy and it's the same goal that we stand here with today. It's the reason why our church exists because someone came along and passed it along to a man named John Werhas who has started and was the first pastor of this church and who has passed that along to many of you who are supposed to continue and go on to pass it along to many others.

39:02

The reason why we exist, our mission statement is to make disciples who know Jesus, follow, serve, and obey Jesus. The idea is that we would make disciples who would grow up in their faith, would grow to mature manhood and womanhood so that they can reproduce themselves and make more of them.

39:22

It's what Paul is talking about here in verse two. All of those descriptor words, they help us because I'm thickheaded, I don't know if any of you are, but I need things to just be spelled out really clearly for me.

39:33

And so our mission statement, we wrote it that way so that we would understand, we described what the mission is because the mission really simply is just the first few words. RockCC exists to make disciples.

39:47

But a disciple is a follower, is someone who is learning to be like their master. And so if we're gonna make disciples, well let's just describe what that looks like. Well we have to know Jesus, we have to know who he is and have a personal relationship with him.

40:03

We have to learn what it looks like to live in the way that he's invited us to live and learn to follow him and then we start to serve and we start to obey him and his command that he gave us to go and to make more of us.

40:16

That's what Jesus told the apostles to do, it's what he told us to do. And we just make those really explicitly clear in our mission, we stick little icons up there so that it helps us remember. We spell it out so that we don't get confused about what are the things that are important to us.

40:34

Because this is why we exist. This is why the church exists. Not just our church but THE church, the universal church, the fact that there are Christians all over the world this morning worshipping our same God.

40:50

The church's core task is finding and training more disciples and furthering the message of Jesus. That's what Paul's talking about here in verse two. What I've given to you, give it to other people, who will give it to other people, dot, dot, dot, who will give it to other people, who will give it to other people.

41:13

That doesn't mean that we ever minimize some of the other things that we do as churches, right? We still have community, we still have fun, we still do lots of good things, but whatever our immediate tasks are, the mission is still the mission.

41:29

The reason we exist is still the reason that we exist. We exist to make disciples of Jesus Christ. It's important for us as a church to resist the urge of slipping into all the other success metrics that many other churches would evaluate success by.

41:46

We resist the common practice of measuring church success by the size of the budget, by the success of the number of programs that we have, by the success of an event's attendance. Those are all valuable things for us to consider, but they're not the mission.

42:03

The mission is to make more disciples, make more followers of Jesus. That's why we exist, and that's why we do everything that we do as a church, as individuals. We exist to make disciples who make disciples.

42:21

That's why as a church we're always asking the question. I'm always asking the question. We hopefully are starting to think this way. We're all asking this question repeatedly. How can we make more disciples of Jesus?

42:33

What can I do differently? How do I need to change here or change there? What can we as a church do differently here or there? How can we spend our resources? How can we use our time? How can we use our programs?

42:45

How can I use my nights of the week or whatever it is? How can I make more disciples of Jesus? Because our goal is to always be training and sending out more people. This happens as we do the quiet work of equipping parents to disciple their children.

43:06

Pastor Mike talked about a couple of weeks ago with our announcement down here. If you remember, I love the announcements that we've been making recently. We've made two of them in the last month or so.

43:16

The first one was that we're providing resources to our families. And if you're a grown - up, you can memorize scripture too. You can watch those and they'll get stuck in your head just like they do our kids. I was singing it bouncing around the house this week because my kids are bouncing around singing this Bible verse.

43:35

But we've got a Bible memory program where Daniel and Brittany Scott have taken Bible verses, put them to music to get them stuck in your head, and we learn more about who God is and more about His Word.

43:49

That's the reason why we're providing parent discipleship emails on a weekly basis where we can support parents with resources, help you pass along the gospel to the next generation. It's because we want to make followers of Jesus who can go and grow up and make more followers of Jesus.

44:05

We do that really efficiently with our children. If we do our job as parents, if we do our job as adults in the community, I hope, I pray, that you will help me raise my children to know and follow Jesus.

44:20

I hope that we will do that for one another. It also happens as we, as members of the church, take time to disciple others, that we take what we've been given and we give it to somebody else, maybe that happens over coffee, maybe that happens over dinner one night, every once in a while, maybe that's a friendship that you have developed in some way, that you say, hey, I was where you were, where you are.

44:47

Follow me as I follow Christ. Paul's famous words. We do that in personally discipling others. We do that in the classes that we offer. We teach people what it means to follow Jesus. It also happens when we support efforts around the world to plant churches and to raise up pastors and to send missionaries around the world like you've heard from us over the past several months as well.

45:12

It's important for us not just to think that this mission exists in Southern California. God wants us to raise up followers of Jesus across the world. It starts here, but it continues to the ends of the earth.

45:29

Paul's encouraging Timothy and talking about strengthening him for the mission in verses one and two, but now he gets to these applications, these illustrations of what it looks like as he describes disciplined focus on the mission.

45:42

Versus three through six, Paul gives some clear illustrations of what perseverance can look like and how it can be worthwhile. There's three specific roles where suffering and hard work and perseverance are a required part of the job and he lays these three things out for us.

45:59

Versus three through six, he says, share and suffering as a good soldier. So we see a soldier listed first. No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuit since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. Second, he mentions an athlete. He says an athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. Finally, he mentions the hardworking farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops.

46:22

So the first illustration that we see in these first couple of verses in this section is the soldier. This is a familiar analogy for Paul to be using because he has compared the Christian life with warfare repeatedly.

46:34

In Philippians and Philemon, he refers to Christians as fellow soldiers. In Ephesians chapter six, we see this extended section where Paul talks about spiritual warfare and preparing ourselves for war as he talks about the spiritual armor and the spiritual weapons with which we protect ourselves.

46:53

This idea of a committed soldier, it brings to mind thoughts of resolute devotion, of absolute loyalty and courage and a commitment to the mission above all else because of a soldier's attention is divided.

47:08

If their affections are divided, they're not going to be a successful soldier. In order to succeed, soldiers must often endure extreme challenges. And I say these things knowing that there are men and women in this room who have served and have lived that life of a soldier.

47:26

We're thankful for you. I hope I fairly represent what you've experienced and gone through, but in order to succeed as a soldier, I believe you experience and have to face

some extreme challenges, things like hunger as you may be in a place where food isn't readily available to you to just run over to McDonald's.

47:47

You must endure losing companions. You have to endure extreme weather and the elements. I'm certain you have to endure far more that I can not even imagine. We're thankful for all that you've done, but Paul speaks of soldiers and their single -minded devotion to the mission because he says, in the midst of all of those things that press in on soldiers, soldiers got jobs, soldiers' goal is to please the one who enlisted them, is to please their commanding officer.

48:22

Their job is not to seek work -life balance as they're out on the battlefield. It's not to learn some new hobby. Now is not the time to take up a basket weaving or whatever you may want to learn. They are devoted and focused on the mission at hand above everything else, and Paul is inviting Timothy.

48:40

I think by extension, Paul is inviting us to the same kind of single -minded devotion to the mission of making disciples. What you've been given, focus everything you've got on taking it and giving it to somebody else.

48:55

He also illustrates this idea with an athlete. He compares Christian workers to athletes in verse five. He says an athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. Now Paul doesn't name the rules here.

49:09

That'd be really simple for us and easy to understand. He doesn't name the rules that he's specifically referring to, but we know competitive sports include both objective and subjective expectations.



49:21

If you're going to compete in some contest, there's some expectations that are placed on you. The subjective rules that are necessary are required. We have to train and prepare in order to be successful at some athletic competition.

49:36

Athletes must train themselves to be fit in the manner that their sport requires. If I want to be a successful athlete, it requires hard work and disciplined training. And if my disciplined training consists of Big Macs and Netflix, I'm probably not gonna be successful at whatever it is that I'm going to try and go do, right?

49:57

There's a problem there. There's expected and necessary effort that goes into being a successful athlete. In fact, there's many scholars I was reading this week, many people who thought that that may be specifically what Paul was referring to in these verses.

50:15

Because in the ancient Olympics, there was a requirement that the athletes who were coming to compete in the Olympics, they had to swear an oath before Zeus that they had trained for 10 months before they came to the competition.

50:27

There was an expectation that they had trained themselves and they had to swear that they had trained themselves. Those were the rules and the expectations for athletes. They needed to be prepared and they needed to work hard.

50:39

Objectively, they also have to compete according to the rules. Athletes will not be declared the winner of a competition if they don't abide by the rules that are set up for whatever the competition is.

50:51

Swimmers have to stay in their lanes, right? I may be really great at freestyle swimming, but if I compete in the butterfly and I freestyle swim, I'm not going to be declared the winner. I've broken the rules, right?

51:04

Distance runners can't use bikes in order to win the marathon. You have to use permitted equipment, permitted practices if you're going to compete and win a contest. Even if the athlete breaks a rule unknowingly, they're still disqualified, right?

51:23

We have to compete according to the rules. I think the lesson for us to learn from the athlete here that Paul brings an athlete up is the importance of disciplined preparation and training. We don't succeed unless we prepare to succeed.

51:39

An athlete will never succeed without proper preparation. And finally, the last illustration that Paul gives is the farmer. And the farmer illustrates hard work. Verse six, he says, it is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops.

51:55

And we know that if we've got any farmers in the room, anybody that lives in that space, we know that farming today is hard work. But imagine before they had tractors and before they had all the resources that we have available to us today.

52:10

Imagine how hard farming was for these men and women who gave themselves to the life of farming. Required early and long hours. They had to be up before everybody else. Often they go to bed after everybody else.

52:22

It requires constant effort. It seems like the world is just fighting against whatever it is that they're trying to succeed. By the way, read Genesis chapter three. It's because the world is fighting against them and what they're trying to accomplish.

52:34

They have to face regular disappointment, regular attacks on their crops as frost comes, or pests come, or disease comes. All these things drought can attack and can ruin their hard work. And finally, requires patience.

52:52

Because you may out and go and work hard and put it in the ground and you know what you don't get to do that day? Enjoy the fruits of your labor. You have to wait. You have to keep working day after day, week after week, month after month, season after season often before you see the results of that hard work.

53:11

But if a farmer refuses to wake up early, put their shoulder to the plow to put in the work to succeed at farming, he's not gonna have any crops to harvest at the end of that season, right? That there's a flaw.

53:27

If he doesn't put in the work, he's not going to yield the reward. Lazy people make bad farmers. You know what, lazy Christians? Lazy people make bad Christians too. Someone would follow Christ. God is inviting us to have a dedicated work ethic.

53:47

He's telling us there is work to be done and it's not enough for us to just come and casually sit and say, oh, somebody else can do it. It's not enough for us to just sit back because there is a commitment to the task at hand that God expects of us.

54:04

If we have been given this incredible gift of salvation, if we've been given this incredible good news that God has made available to us, we are expected to take it and to give it to somebody else. You know, farming is a great analogy for the spiritual work of the kingdom of God.

54:26

Because there's a lot of effort that goes into our work. Hard work sometimes, trying to invest what we've been given to somebody else. We cultivate relationships. We plant seeds of the gospel in people's lives, not knowing where some will grow and some will fade away.

54:46

We do hard work uprooting error and feeding truth into our lives and into the lives of those that are around us, but ultimately, just like a farmer, that the yield is not ultimately in our hands. We don't get to decide how much fruit comes out of a tree.

55:02

We don't get to decide exactly how much yield comes from a harvest. In the same way, we can't control what God chooses to do as he takes and blesses some efforts and doesn't bless others. We can't control how people respond to the truth when we tell them the good news of the gospel.

55:24

But just like the soldier, just like the athlete, the farmer is rewarded for their diligent work. When success comes, they're given the reward and they deserve the yield of their reward as a result of their faithful perseverance, as a result of their hard work, they are rewarded by their harvest.

55:48

Paul finishes this section with verse seven. He gives these illustrations and he finishes by saying, think about what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. He says, think over what I say.

56:02

He's giving this command to Timothy. He's urging him to consider carefully the analogies that he's given in verses four through six. These illustrations of a farmer and an athlete and a soldier hopefully would help Timothy understand the call, the invitation of Jesus and invite Timothy to join Paul in suffering for the sake of the gospel.

56:26

Because all three of those tasks, all three of those people have suffering as a part of their job, right? There's an element of suffering there. A soldier's single-minded devotion often means that they neglect other things.

56:40

They often don't have everything that they want in all the areas of life because they're focused on that one thing. Athletes' rigorous exercise comes along with pain. It's hard work sometimes, right? You deprive yourself of things that you might enjoy because the goal is fitness, is success in that athletic endeavor.

57:09

The farmer's hard work, a lot of days that maybe they just want to go play golf. Maybe they just want to lay on the couch and take a nap. But if a farmer doesn't go out and work hard day after day after day, problems don't take a break. So he can't take a break either. But you know what? In the face of all the suffering that all these three face, they also all have their reward. Because beyond the war, beyond warfare is victory.

57:43

Beyond the athlete's effort is the prize, is success in that competition. Beyond a farmer's labor is the harvest. Paul doesn't just say, think about what I said because it was a complex idea that was too difficult to comprehend.

58:00

Hey, sit here and think about the mysteries of what I'm describing to you. It's not something that we can't understand at a surface level. I think most of us are tracking with what he's saying here. We don't need to figure it out.

58:13

What Paul's saying is, slow down and think through what it would look like to apply these lessons. It's not just, God's not just inviting us to understand some things. This isn't an equation that we just solve for X and we resolve the problem.

58:32

Paul's inviting Timothy to apply the lessons and that's far more important than simply understanding them. Because God doesn't just call us to intellectual agreement with facts. We're called to obedient action as we set our focus on the mission.

58:48

Verse 2, he lays out the mission. What you have been given, give it to someone else who will be prepared to go and to give it to someone else. What you've heard from me in the presence of many witnesses and trust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

59:03

That's multiplication. That's the mission that Jesus gave us. Go make disciples who can make disciples who can make disciples. I love describing it as pyramid schemes for Jesus. You go find three and then they'll get terrible business model but it's Jesus' plan for the world.

59:24

Just don't sell him makeup or workout supplements or whatever. Give him Jesus. I was just talking about this with somebody this week. Discipleship, investing yourself into somebody else. It's a slow process.

59:42

It's a frustrating process. It's a process that often we look at this thing and we go, isn't there a better way than just spending day after day after day having these little simple conversations that feel like they're not going anywhere.

59:58

It would be easier for it. Why don't we go rent So-Fi? We can do this big thing and we'll get some concerts and we'll get some big fun stuff and maybe we can get a few football players to come and we'll do this big thing and we'll see all these people come to Jesus.

01:00:12

That sounds fast, right? Not necessarily easy but fast. Jesus' plan was multiplication. Paul's plan was multiplication. It was what you have been given, give it to someone else. Now there's two of you doing the work.

01:00:33

Then you two go and take it and give it to somebody else and now there's four of you doing the work. Generation after generation after generation of that. Now we've multiplied ourselves far beyond what a football stadium can hold.

01:00:49

Generational discipleship, like we see in verse two, what you've been given, give it to others. It requires application. It doesn't just require intellectual understanding because I could sit here and show you the math and it would be really easy to convince you that multiplication ultimately grows faster than addition.

01:01:14

We added a thousand people to our church tomorrow and then added a thousand people the next week and then added a thousand people the next week. That feels really fast at first, but if we multiply and we do it the way that Jesus has invited us to, it starts slow, right?

01:01:30

Next week there's two. The week after that there's four. Week after that there's eight, 16, and 32. Then I'm going to stop this because I don't want you guys to know that I'm not good at math. You make it 10 or 15 or 20 and then down that line and you know what you've got?

01:01:56

You've got a much bigger impact than you did by adding a thousand this week and a thousand next week. God's inviting us to be a part of his work. God knows that his way is best, right? He invites us to be a part of his work and he promises us that there's reward waiting on the other side of it.

01:02:23

Because for the athlete, there was a reward at the end of all that hard work. For the soldier, there was a reward at the end of all their dedication and hard work. For the farmer, there's a reward at the end of all their hard work.

01:02:37

God has incredible rewards waiting for us on the other side. And it may not be an easy one to sign up for. Alright, who wants to go to prison with Paul? It's a hard sell, right? If you were here a couple of weeks ago when Pastor Dave showed the picture of the Mamertine prison, it's even a harder sell.

01:02:57

They built a wide spot in the sewer underneath of Rome and threw Paul in it. It's not an easy sell. But Paul's saying, hey, on the other side of this, in the same way that the



soldier and the athlete and the farmer put in the work to receive the reward on the other side, God is inviting you to put in the work to receive the reward on the other side.

01:03:25

If I can do something that I hope is okay, I've got a couple of Marines in the room, so I'm going to ask you guys for permission, give me a thumbs up or a thumbs down so I know for next service. If I can borrow a statement from one of these illustrations that we talked about this week, Paul compared the Christian life to that of a soldier.

01:03:45

So the US Marines motto is Semper Fidelis, right? Semper Phi, we recognize that. Means in Latin, always faithful. I think that's the goal for us. That's the goal for us as Christians because we have been invited to this incredible work and it's difficult at times and in fact it's overwhelming at times.

01:04:09

It will paralyze us if we try to do it in our own strength. But if you remember all the way back at the beginning of this, Paul didn't tell Timothy be strong, right? What did he say? He said, be strengthened.

01:04:26

That the strength comes not from me, not from my guts and intestinal fortitude. It comes from God who provides richly for me to do the work that he's invited me and called me to do. My job is not to be strong.

01:04:41

It's to be faithful. It's to be willing to trust that what God has told me to do, he will strengthen me to do. So my job is simply to put myself out there and say, God, use me. God, use me. It's the same invitation for you.

01:05:02

That the same mission is the same for all of us, right? Take what you've been given and give it to somebody else. That we are part of this chain with link after link after link that ties us back thousands of years to a man who changed the world named Jesus.

01:05:19

But it only takes one link for a chain to break. Don't be that link. Don't be the place where we sit here and go, well, I can't. Of course you can't. I can't either. But Jesus can. But God and the power of His Holy Spirit, God can.

01:05:49

So that's the invitation for us. Our job is simply to be faithful. Our prayer team is going to be down here after the service is over. They would love to pray with you about anything that you've got going on.

01:06:00

Our prayer wall is back in the back hallway. When you go out, if you look to the right, we've got a prayer wall back there that you can place your prayer requests there if you don't have time or don't want to come down with our prayer team after service.

01:06:14

I encourage you. Let that Marine motto ring a little bit different in your mind this week. Always faithful to the mission that you've been invited to be a part of. Let's pray. God, we thank you for your word.

01:06:30

We thank you for your work in our lives. We thank you for your work in the world. And we thank you that you've invited us to be a part of it. God, you have blessed us with far more than we deserve. And God, you have empowered us through the power of your Holy Spirit that came in Acts chapter two on that day of Pentecost that we talked about earlier in the service.

01:07:01

Your Holy Spirit came and dwelt every believer. So God, while we look at the task that we're invited to and it may seem overwhelming and it may seem difficult and it may be too much for us to be strong on our own.

01:07:19

God, we know that you have strengthened us. So our prayer this morning is that we would be strengthened like Timothy was. God, we thank you for God for using busted and broken up people like us to accomplish your work in the world.

01:07:37

It's a privilege. It's a privilege for us. You didn't need us, but you chose to use us. I think there's something profound in that. God, help us to be faithful, to go and to do what you've called us to do, to live faithfully the lives that you've called us to live.

01:08:03

God, help us make disciples who make disciples who make disciples. Father, we love you. We thank you for the cross. We thank you for salvation. We thank you for hearing us. It's through Jesus that all those things happen that we're forgiven, that were adopted, that were heard. And we thank you for Jesus. It's in his name we pray. Amen.