

**A**

**Discipleship Study Guide**

**Designed to Help**

**Those Who Feel Called to Ministry**

**“But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions,**

**do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”**

**– 2Timothy 4:5**

About 15 years before the letter we know as ***1Timothy*** was written, Paul met a young man named Timothy. Timothy was brought up in a religious home (2Tim 1:5), the son of a mixed marriage; he had a Gentile father (Acts 16:1) and a Jewish mother. His mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, had taught him the scriptures since childhood

(2Tim 3:15). Paul had shared with Timothy the gospel of salvation through faith in Jesus, the promised Messiah, and Paul had personally led him to faith in Christ. That is why Paul called Timothy his own son in the faith (1Tim 1:2). Timothy became so devoted to following Christ that his local church leaders affirmed his giftedness for ministry and commended him to Paul. Paul began a mentoring relationship with Timothy, and Timothy traveled with Paul for about 15 years. During one of their trips together, Paul left Timothy in the town of Ephesus to set things in order there, and that is where we find Timothy when he received his first letter from Paul…. 1Timothy. Paul would write a second letter to Timothy – 2Timothy – about 4 years later.

Ephesus would not have been the easiest place to pastor a church. The city was devoted to the worship of Diana, a goddess of sexuality and fertility. There was rampant prostitution and sex traffic in the town. Paul had started the church there, but as he left it years before he had warned the elders of the church there that false teachers would seek to gain an inroad into the church (Acts 20:30). Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to straighten out the problems in the church there.

But, Timothy was a young man… and sometimes people in the church did not follow his leadership and give him the respect he deserved (1Tim. 4:12). Timothy was timid and shy (2Tim 1:6). He was sometimes sickly, or at least was so troubled by the problems in the church that his stomach bothered him (1Tim 5:23). By the time Paul wrote his first letter to Timothy, the tension in the church had Timothy to the point of giving up.

Paul sent his first letter to Timothy to encourage him to keep on going. Paul would send his second letter to Timothy as his last note we have on record from Paul. In that second letter, Paul would write about faithfulness in ministry… reflecting back on his own faithfulness and encouraging Timothy to remain faithful.

From Paul’s 2 letters to Timothy, we find great advice for ministers – young and old. Paul shared with Timothy “10 commandments” for ministers… especially those new to their calling.

**10 Commandments for a Minister**

**and His (or Her) Calling**

**Commandment #1… Keep Your Motives Pure**

**Commandment #2… Make Prayer a Way of Life**

**Commandment #3… Keep Growing in Christ**

**Commandment #4… Keep Focused on What Matters**

**Commandment #5… Keep Your Self Pure**  
  
**Commandment #6… Walk in the Spirit’s Power**

**Commandment** **#7… Measure Success by God’s Standards**

**Commandment** **#8… Study the Word of God**

**Commandment** **#9… Guard Your Closest Relationships**

**Commandment #10… Never Quit**

**Commandment #1:**

**Keep Your Motives Pure**

INTRO: At a Georgia Tech football game years ago, GT was ahead 7 to 6.

As the 4th quarter was winding down, GT’s coach told his quarterback not to throw… no matter what. They ran the ball, play after play… to their opponent’s 10-yard line. It was in the last minute of play, but the quarterback was overcome by temptation; he threw a short pass that was intercepted by the fastest defensive back on the opposing team. That defensive back headed for the far end-zone for a “pick 6”, but the quarterback somehow caught up and tackled him.

After the game, the losing coach asked GT’s head coach, “How did your quarterback catch my fastest back?” GT’s coach answered, “Your back was running for a touchdown; my boy was running for his life.” (Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations, ©1979, Paul Lee Tan, p. 862)

That illustration speaks to motivation… why one does what he/she does.

 *Why do you want to “go into the ministry”?*

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 *Assuming you feel led to vocational ministry because you feel*

*God’s call to vocational ministry, and assuming you want to be obedient to God’s call… what will you do with your call?*

*What are your motives for ministry?*

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Jesus said the greatest commandment of all the commandments is “*to love the Lord your God with all your heart*.” He then added that the 2nd is closely connected to the 1st – “*to love your neighbor as you love yourself*.” Knowing that love flows from – and grows in – the “*heart*”… our emotional center, Paul lists some barometers to gauge our love for God and for those around us.

TEXT: ***1Timothy 1:3-11 (v.5)***

*What goals motivate your service to Christ… and in the church?*

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I. **Godly Character**… “*a pure heart*”

Obviously, Paul wasn’t talking about your physical heart… that amazing organ that beats in your chest. He was talking about that figurative place within us… that place that dictates how we feel and how we think.

- Your Mind

Guard your thoughts as you would your actions.

***See Matthew 5:21-28.***

- Your Will

Obedience breeds purity. ***See 1Peter 1:22.***

- Your Emotions

Love others as God loves them. ***See 1John 3:10.***

II. **Godly Conviction**… “*a good conscience*”

ILL: Lord Byron called man’s conscience the “oracle of God”… that

which speaks God’s desire in any given situation.

All men, women, boys, and girls have a conscience… something within them that nudges us when we do wrong and allows us to recognize wrong from right. But, Christians have the Holy Spirit living within them, and need no longer rely on such a thing as “conscience”.

APP: By listening to God, and confessing what is revealed there, your

conscience will remain clear… not guilty, or hardened/seared.

III. **Godly Confidence**… “*sincere faith*”

Love that will not trust is a shallow love.

Paul believed God regardless of others; ***see v.3,4,7-10***.

CONCL: This must become a daily – if not moment-by-moment – habit!

*What steps can you take to ensure your motives are from a*

*pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith?*

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***See 1Timothy 3:1-7.***

This list of qualifications is just as relevant for ministers today as it was when Paul wrote it for Timothy.

*If you applied this list of qualifications to yourself, how would*

*you measure up?*

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*What quality/qualities from this list do you want to improve in*

*your life?*

*How could you start?*

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**Commandment #2:**

**Keep Growing in Christ**

INTRO: When Jesus said that only “*those who hunger and thirst after*

*righteousness shall be filled*”, He revealed this principle… our degree of spiritual development depends on our desire for growth.

Paul’s goal is to whet our appetites to know Christ more intimately.

TEXT: ***1Timothy 1:12-20***

I. **Aspire to Follow the Example of Jesus… & Godly Disciples** (v.16)

***See Philippians 3:13.*** How did Paul maintain this balance in his life… this balance between “look to me as an example” and “but I’m not yet where I need to be”?

- Recognition

Paul recognized God’s Grace (v.12)

- Remembering

Paul remembered his life before/without God (v.13,15)

- Rejoicing

Paul rejoiced in his own conversion (v.14,17)

APP: This is a good outline to follow in order to share your faith…

Godlessness… Grace… God’s Intervention… Gladness

II. **Actively Use Your God-Given Gifts**

3 times, Paul appealed to Timothy to rekindle… to fan the flame… of his gifts.

- See your gifts (v.18)

- Stop neglecting your gifts (1Tim. 4:14)

- Start using your gifts (2Tim. 1:6)

APP: To help you discover your spiritual gift(s), take the Spiritual

Gifts Test at the end of this section.

III. **Ardently Fight the Temptation to Quit** (v.18-20)

- Spiritual growth is more like a grueling battle than a pleasant retreat

(v.18).

- The “*good fight*” (1Tim. 6:12) demands faith!

- The “*good soldier*” must “*endure hardness*” (2Tim. 2:3).

CONCL:

 *What steps can you take to ensure your faith is on the proper*

*course and not in danger of being shipwrecked?*

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*What events/experiences in your life can you use to encourage*

*others to believe?*

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When the new birth of salvation happens, spiritual growth begins. The Holy Spirit indwells us ([John 14:16,17](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2014.16-17" \t "_blank)). We are new creatures in Christ ([2Cor. 5:17](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Cor%205.17" \t "_blank)). The old, sinful nature begins to give way to the new, Christlike nature ([Rom. 6,7](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%206-7" \t "_blank)). Spiritual growth is a lifelong process that depends on our study and application of God's Word ([2Tim. 3:16,17](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim%203.16-17" \t "_blank)) and our walk in the Spirit ([Gal. 5:16-26](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gal%205.16-26" \t "_blank)).

As we seek spiritual growth, we should pray to God and ask for wisdom concerning the areas He desires us to grow in. We can ask God to increase our faith and knowledge of Him. God desires for us to grow spiritually, and He has given us all we need to experience spiritual growth.

With the Holy Spirit’s help, we can overcome sin and steadily become more like our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Commandment #3:**

**Make Prayer a Way of Life**

INTRO: Prayer is surrender to the will of God and cooperation with that

will.

If I throw out a boat hook from a boat and catch hold of the shore and pull, do I pull the shore to me, or do I pull myself to the shore?

Prayer is not pulling God to my will, but the aligning of my will to the will of God.

*(*E. Stanley Jones - Swindoll’s Ultimate Book of Illustrations and Quotes, p. 453*).*

Jesus said, “*When you pray*…” (Matt. 6:5). He assumed believers would pray, and – from that assumption – began to teach His disciples how to pray.

To improve Timothy’s prayer life, Paul offered this advice. It’s good advice for us, too…

TEXT: ***1Timothy 2:1-8***

I. **Make Prayer Important** (v.1,8)

- Give Prayer a High Priority

Prayer should be the highest priority for a disciple… “*first of all*”.

- Give Prayer Adequate Time

Paul lists 4 types of prayer:

1) supplication… asking or begging for something earnestly or humbly.

2) prayers… general communication with God, implying worship and

adoration.

3) intercessions… requests on behalf of others.

4) thanksgiving… expressions of gratitude for what God has done.

This is obviously not an exhaustive list, and should not be interpreted as a checklist that must be prayed every time we pray (for example, confession is not listed… nor is praise). But, they are examples of prayers that go beyond a single-sentence, memorized prayer that we don’t really think about while we’re “praying” it.

ILL: Anne Lamott has written a book about prayer in which she categorizes all prayers into 1 of 3 categories. The title of her book even suggests you can pray anyone of these 3 prayers by saying only 1 word!

The title of her book is *HELP. THANKS. WOW.*

I certainly don’t want to minimize the point of her book, but I think we could spend hours within each of those words… specifically naming concerns for which we need God’s help, specifically thanking God for His blessings in our life by naming them one by one, and specifically citing the attributes of God that are so worthy to be praised.

II. **Make Prayer Inclusive** (v.1,2)

- Pray for “*all men*” (and women, boys, & girls).

- Pray for those “*in authority*”.

At the time Paul was writing these letters to Timothy, he was probably in prison… waiting on what he was sure would be his death. The Roman Emperor, Nero, had imprisoned Paul and had begun a wave of persecution the Church had not yet seen to this time. Yet, Paul exhorted disciples to pray for those in authority… their adversaries. ***See Matthew 5:44***.

III. **Make Prayer Intercessory** (v.2b-7)

Paul linked prayer with God’s redemptive purpose. God could do anything He chooses regarding salvation. Yet, He has involved you and me in His redemptive purpose through our prayers and through our witness.

- Pray for “*all men*” (and women, boys, & girls) (v.1)

- God wants to save “*all men*” (v.4)

- Christ died for “*all*” (v.6)

APP: A mark of spiritual maturity can be measured by how much of

our prayer time focuses on others… rather than ourselves.

CONCL: This type of praying leads to peace (v.2), pleases God (v.3), and

aligns us with His purposes (v.4-7).

*If you were to put a percentage to the types of prayers you*

*pray, what might these percentages look like?*

Praise \_\_\_\_\_%

Confession \_\_\_\_\_%

Repentance \_\_\_\_\_%

Asking for Yourself \_\_\_\_\_%

Asking for Others \_\_\_\_\_%

Yielding to God’s Will \_\_\_\_\_%

 *What are the areas of prayer in which you need to grow?*

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Make prayer a priority… a habit… in your own personal life!

Find a pattern of prayer that works for you.

- You might try an acrostic:

\* **A**doration \* **P**raising

\* **C**onfession \* **R**epenting

\* **T**hanksgiving \* **A**sking

\* **S**upplication \* **Y**ielding

- You might try using the fingers & thumb of your hand:

\* Thumb… pray for those closest to you; family & friends

\* Index Finger… pray for those who direct; those in authority

\* Middle Finger… pray for those who are the “higher-ups”;

leaders, government officials, president, etc.

\* Ring Finger… pray for those who are weakest and in need.

\* Pinky Finger… pray for yourself.

ILL: In one region of Africa, the first converts to Christianity were very

diligent about praying. In fact, the believers each had their own special place outside the village where they went to pray in solitude. The villagers reached these “prayer rooms” by using their own private footpaths through the brush. When grass began to grow over one of these trails, it was evident that the person to whom it belonged was not praying very much. Because these new Christians were concerned for each other’s spiritual welfare, a unique custom sprang up. Whenever anyone noticed an overgrown “prayer path,” he or she would go to the person and lovingly warn, “Friend, there’s grass on your path!” (RWD Our Daily Bread, November 18, 1996)

**Commandment #4:**

**Keep Focused on What Matters**

INTRO: Every discipline in life becomes a discipline by assessing a value

to a thing… a desired attitude/activity/outcome…and then defining focus toward/on that thing.

 *So, where should a disciple focus his/her time and energy?*

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Paul sprinkled the answer to that question throughout ***1&2Timothy***…

TEXT: ***1Timothy 4:6-11***

*What qualities do you look for in a pastor/minister?*

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I. **Nourish Your Faith on Sound Doctrine** (v.6)

- A Warning/Identification of Unsound Doctrine

***See 1Tim. 1:3-10; 4:7; 6:4,5,20; 2Tim. 2:14-18***.

\* Types of: “*myths*”, “*genealogies*”, “*superstitions*”, “*questions*

*and disputes*”, “*gossip*”, pseudo-knowledge, and “*profitless words*”.

\* Dangers of:

Fosters doubt… sidetracks believers… leads to immorality… produces envy, suspicion, arguments, and division… subverts the truth… overthrows the weak.

- A Call to Feed on Sound Doctrine (v.6)

APP: Do you know the real thing well enough to recognize a

counterfeit?

ILL: Bank tellers learn to recognize counterfeit bills not by studying counterfeit bills… but by studying real bills so intently. They immerse themselves in the look and feel and even smell of real bills to such a degree they can spot a fake.

II. **Exercise Your Faith unto Godliness** (v.7,12; 1Tim. 6:3)

The word “*Godliness*” only appears 15 times in the Bible; 9 of which are in ***1Timothy***.

Libertines and Legalists have long debated the nature of godliness. Jesus rejected both of these extremes, and demonstrated how to become truly godly.

- Mastery comes through practice (v.7)

- Godliness is rooted in our relationship to Christ (1Tim. 3:16).

*What does your use of time show about how much you value*

*training for godliness?*

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 *What specific actions can you schedule into your daily routine*

*to nurture your godliness?*

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*In what ways can you be an example to other believers?*

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III. **Declare Your Faith to Others** (v.10,11; 1Tim. 2:3-7; 4:16; 2Tim. 4:2,3)

APP: Write your testimony… and practice sharing it so you can do it

in 3 minutes or less…

- My Life before I Met Christ:

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- My Turning Point with Christ:

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- My Life since I Met Christ:

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CONCL: A seminar leader wanted to make an important point, so he took

a wide-mouth jar and filled it with rocks. “Is the jar full?” he asked. “Yes,” came a reply. “Oh, really?” he said. Then he poured smaller pebbles into the jar to fill the spaces between the rocks. “Is it full now?” “Yes,” said someone else. “Oh, really?” He then filled the remaining spaces between the rocks and stones with sand. “Is it full now?” he asked. “Probably not,” said another, to the amusement of the audience. Then he took a pitcher of water and poured it into the jar.

“What’s the lesson we learn from this? The lesson is: to get everything in the jar, you must always put the big things in first.”

What are you putting first in your life?

There will always be a temptation towards distraction from priorities; this is true in every area of life… even that of church life and the life of a disciple.

ILL: Rick Warren, in his book The Purpose-Driven Church, named

the 5 purposes of the Church as Fellowship, Discipleship, Worship, Ministry, and Evangelism.

The **Priorities of the Church** should always be found in the 5 purposes of the church.

I remember these 5 by using the acrostic F-O-C-U-S:

- **F**ellowship

- **O**utreach (Evangelism)

- **C**ultivation (Discipleship)

- **U**preach (Worship)

- **S**ervice (Ministry)

These 5 purposes should be the 5 priorities of the church. And church leaders ought to lead their church in these 5 priorities.

But, the **Priorities of a Disciple** must also be maintained:

Prayer (worship), Bible Study (discipleship), Building Relationships (fellowship/discipleship/evangelism), Using one’s Spiritual Gift(s) (ministry), and sharing Christ through Word & Deed (evangelism).

*Which of these areas of discipleship do you need to focus on*

*more?*

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*What practical steps can you take to do better in these needed areas?*

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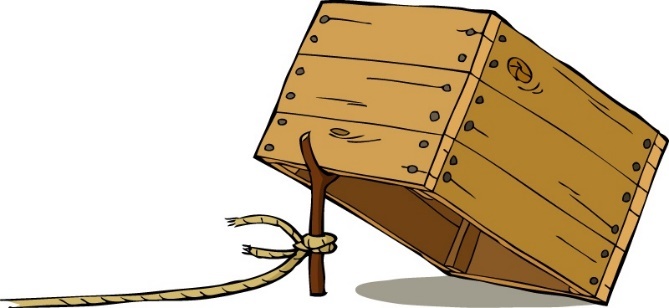
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**Commandment #5:**

**Keep Your Self Pure**

INTRO: Box traps are used by hunters. The animal sees the trap, smells

the bait, and senses danger… yet walks right into the trap. Why? Because the bait promises to satisfy a need/desire.



Paul uses 3 strong imperatives to tell us how to stay out of Satan’s moral box traps…

TEXT: ***1Timothy 6:11-14; 2Timothy 2:20-26***

I. **“*Flee*” that which Ensnares** (1Tim. 6:11a)

- The snare of Error (2Tim. 2:24-26)

- The snare of Greed (1Tim. 6:9)

- The snare of Lust (2Tim. 2:22)

APP: This is surely not an exhaustive list, but it is representative of

how tempting these traps can be… and how we have our hands full just dealing with these 3!

*Which of these 3 temptations most often entrap you?*

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*Other than these 3 temptations, can you name one that*

*regularly tempts you?*

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*What steps could you take to avoid temptations?*

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II. **“*Follow*” that which Enriches** (1Tim. 6:11b)

These “*prepare*” us for “*use*” (2Tim. 2:15):

- “*Righteousness*” & “*Godliness*”

Our conduct before God… and before mankind.

- “*Faith*” & “*Love*”

Our attitude toward God… and toward mankind.

- “*Patience*” & “*Gentleness*”

Our treatment of difficult people; ***see 2Tim. 2:24-26***.

III. **“*Fight*” for that which Endures** (1Tim. 6:12)

- “*Fight*”… obtaining moral purity is like an ongoing, agonizing

conflict.

- “*Lay hold*”… you can gain the upper hand in the spiritual struggle of

faith.

CONCL: After a violent storm one night, a large tree, which over the years

had become a stately giant, was found lying across the pathway in a park. Nothing but a splintered stump was left. Closer examination showed that it was rotten at the core because thousands of tiny insects had eaten away at its heart. The weakness of that tree was not brought on by the sudden storm; it began the very moment the first insect nested within its bark.

With the Holy Spirit’s help, let’s be very careful to guard our purity.

**Commandment #6:**

**Walk in the Spirit’s Power**

INTRO: Alcoholics behave in certain ways because they have come under

the influence and power of an outside influence. We even have a term for those who drive drunk… DUI; driving under the influence.

Seizing on a similar truth, Paul write to the Ephesians (5:18): “*Do not be drunk with wine… but be filled with the Holy Spirit*”.

The Holy Spirit is intended to be a believer’s inside influence.

The Holy Spirit is often misunderstood. Here is a quick synopsis of the Holy Spirit… The Holy Spirit came, as promised by Jesus, at Pentecost. He is God, the 3rd Person of the Trinity. He is omnipotent (all-powerful), omniscient (all-knowing), and omnipresent (everywhere at once). Being sent from the Father, He glorifies Jesus Christ and His work for salvation. He convicts the sinner of his/her sins, gives spiritual life to the believer, and lives within the believer… sealing him for eternal salvation.

A believer’s ability to live life as a disciple depends on his/her willingness to submit to the indwelling Spirit of God… to come under His influence.

Paul reminds Timothy of several benefits of the Spirit-controlled life…

TEXT: ***2Timothy 1:7-15***

I. **Wisdom to Overcome Falsehood** (1Tim. 4:1)

Satan manipulates the truth to deceive us… and others.

- Satan’s Methods:

\* Distort the Truth (1Tim. 4:1)

\* Detract from the Truth (2Tim. 2:17,18)

\* Displace the Truth (1Tim. 4:3)

\* Dilute the Truth (2Tim. 4:3,4)

- Holy Spirit’s Provision:

\* Discernment (1Tim. 4:1)

\* DivulgingTruth (2Tim. 3:15)

II. **Courage to Overcome Fear** (v.7)

Paul said a believer can courageously face problems with the Spirit’s “*power*”.

*How is the spirit of power, love, and self-discipline shown in*

*your life?*

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III. **Strength to Overcome Failure** (v.13-15)

In Paul’s 2 letters to Timothy, Paul identified several leaders who went away from God.

- Hymenaeus… ***see 1Tim. 1:20; 2Tim. 2:17***

- Philetus… ***2Tim. 2:17*** - Phygelus… ***2Tim. 1:15***

- Hermogenes… ***2Tim. 1:15*** - Demas… ***2Tim. 4:9,10***

- Alexander… ***2Tim. 4:14; 1Tim. 1:20(?)***

*Can you think of those who once professed Christ but no longer live for Christ? Why do you think they failed?*

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APP: Only by depending on the Holy Spirit can we find the strength to avoid the same tragedy.

CONCL: "Without the power of the Holy Spirit, all human efforts, methods

and plans are as futile as attempting to propel a boat by puffing at the sails with our own breath.” - D.M. Dawson

To be filled with the Holy Spirit means that we allow Him to occupy and control every area of our lives. But, we decide how much of us the Holy Spirit has. How much of you does the Holy Spirit have?   
Let’s say you have 2 glasses of water and 2 packets of Alka-Seltzer. And let’s say you open one packet and empty it into one glass, and drop the other unopened packet into the other glass.  
Both glasses have the Alka-Seltzer, just as all Christians have the Holy Spirit (who indwells each Christian at the point of salvation).

But, notice how you can have the Holy Spirit and not His filling. The Holy Spirit is limited to the extent we release Him through our lives.

Make it your goal to live in such a way as to unwrap the packaging around the presence and power of the Holy Spirit within you… receiving all the power He has to share.

**Commandment #7:**

**Measuring Success by God’s Standards**

INTRO: In ***2Cor. 10***, the apostle Paul showed the foolishness of trying to

judge our own character by our own opinions (v.12-18). We would be wrong to evaluate ourselves by devising our own guidelines… or the opinions of others. We must use God’s line of measurement. He evaluates our lives by the standard of His unchanging character and purposes.

What we are is what the Lord says we are!

*Whose approval do you most often seek? Family? Friends?*

*Church members? God?*

Paul gives a way of measuring spiritual progress…

TEXT: ***2Timothy 2:15-21***

I. **Measure Spiritual Devotion by Commitment to the Local Church**

(1Tim. 3:14-16; 2Tim. 2:10)

It helps to keep these 2 things in mind:

- The Sheep in the Church (v.14,15)

Paul told Timothy to instruct the congregation concerning how they should behave themselves in the house of God.

- The Savior of the Church (v.16)

In this single verse, Paul gave a 6-fold summary of Jesus’ earthly ministry.

1) He appeared in a body (v.16a)

2) He was vindicated by the Spirit (v.16b)

3) He was seen by angels (v.16c)

4) He was announced to the nations (v.16d)

5) He was believed on in the world (v.16e)

6) He was taken up into Heaven (v.16f)

APP: Paul was devoted to the Church because Jesus died for the

Church.

II. **Measure Spiritual Development by Growth in Godliness**

Paul gives 2 examples of improper methods for determining spiritual maturity:

- Measuring Growth Materialistically (1Tim. 6:5)

- Measuring Growth Legalistically (2Tim. 3:5)

APP: Spiritual maturity is not measured by what is seen on the

outside, but by what is happening on the inside!

III. **Measure Spiritual Discipleship by Reproduction** (2Tim. 2:2)

***See Matt. 28:19,20***… *“make disciples… teaching them”.*

***See Mark 1:17.***

APP: We were not called to make converts; we were called to make

disciples. And disciples reproduce themselves.

Become a part of a small group of people (2-6) into whom you can pour your life. Do that for 6-12 months, and do that over and over and over again… encouraging them to do the same.

IV. **Measure Potential by God’s Call and Anointing** (2Tim. 1:6,14; 4:11)

We often judge leadership potential by evaluating a person’s abilities, gifts, or even their past.

Moses, Rahab, and Mark are examples that remind us that Kingdom potential is related to God’s calling and anointing; He is able to overcome any deficiency we might have.

CONCL:

 *What are the qualities for a minister a typical church might emphasize?*

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 *If God were to grade you, what would be the qualities He would grade?*

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**Commandment #8:**

**Study the Word of God**

INTRO: Though not a requirement to successful ministry, education is

helpful and important. You may be planning to pursue a degree, but the best degree you could earn is an A.U.G. degree… “*approved unto God*”.

Paul presents a plan to help us study the Word of God…

TEXT: ***2Timothy 3:14-17***

I. Trust It

Though Paul didn’t worship the Bible, he did consider it to be:

- Inspired by God (v.16)

Though the Bible has many writers, it has only one Author.

- Infallible in Application (v.15)

“*Holy Scriptures*” will not lead us astray from God.

- Inerrant in Substance (v.15)

Paul called the Scriptures “*truth*”. Something can only be true if it is true in its entirety.

APP: You can trust the Word of God. Get to know it by reading it

regularly… daily!

Michael Hyatt suggests the following thoughts concerning daily Bible reading:

\* Read at a set time each day.

What gets scheduled gets done. I would recommend you read the Bible [first thing each morning](http://michaelhyatt.com/slay-your-dragons-before-breakfast.html" \t "_blank" \o "Post: ), so you don’t get side-tracked by something else.

\* Distinguish between reading and study.

When you’re studying, you might do word studies, read commentaries, or chase cross-references. When you’re reading, the goal is breadth… not depth.

\* Use a balanced, Bible reading plan.

You might choose a “read-the-Bible-in-a-year” plan. You might randomly pick a page and read until something hits your heart. You might choose any number of reading methods. I would recommend you read from 4 passages each day: Old Testament, New Testament, Psalms, and Proverbs. This way, if you hit a dry patch in one section, you can usually get something out of another.

Many different plans are available.

\* Read in an easy-to-understand translation.

You might have a specific translation you preach/teach from, but find something easy to read from which to read. You might read a different translation each year, so the text doesn’t become so familiar you stop paying attention.

\* Highlight or underline as you read.

Some of your better Bible studies might come through your daily Bible readings.

\* Identify at least one key take away.

Your goal in Bible reading is not just to increase your knowledge; you want to change your life! This begins by paying attention to what you’re reading and marking those passages that seem particularly relevant to your current circumstances. When you’re finished reading, go back over your highlights and pick one to [record in your journal](http://michaelhyatt.com/daily-journal.html" \t "_blank" \o "Post: ), along with your response to it.

\* Don’t beat yourself up if you miss a day.

You’re going to miss some days. It’s okay. It’s not the end of the world. It doesn’t mean you’re a failure. Just pick up the next day and keep moving.

The key, I think, is to keep the process simple. Don’t make it more complicated than it needs to be. Don’t get hung up on what you don’t understand.

Like [Mark Twain once said](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0060751045/mhyatt-20" \t "_blank" \o "Amazon: The Wit and Wisdom of Mark Twain by Alex Ayres (Harper Perennial, 2005), “It ain’t the parts of the Bible that I can’t understand that bother me, it is the parts that I do understand.”

 *If you aren’t a consistent Bible reader, what’s keeping you from*

*it? If you are, what advice would you offer others?*

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As you read the Bible, Read It… Think It… Pray It… Live It.

II. **Discern It** (2Tim. 2:14,15)

- Read it “*diligently*”.

- “Rightly divide” it:

\* It Enlightens us (v.15… “*wise unto salvation*”)

\* It Edifies us (v.16… “*profitable*”)

\* It Equips us (v.17… “*thoroughly furnished*”)

III. **Obey It**

***See 2Tim. 2:15.*** Every AWANA kid knows this verse, but don’t miss what it says - “Diligently seek to discern the truth that you may produce works that stand the test of God”.

- We read in order to “*produce*” acceptable works.

- It equips us for “*every good work*”.

CONCL: Can you build a real house without blueprints? Sure, you might

be able to construct a square storage shed without them, but do you not need to have some kind of visual plan of the dimensions, how many rooms, where the rooms go, and so on in order to start building an actual house?   
You can have the perfectly prepared property, all the materials and building skills necessary, lots of manpower and money, but if you don’t know what you’re building and why, none of it is of any use. This is why Bible intake is the most important spiritual discipline. The Bible is the primary way that God authentically and decisively communicates with us.

Do we love to hear from Him through his word, or do we just want to talk to him?

Concerning Bible Study (beyond regular Bible reading) I might suggest the following plan…

**“THE INTERPRETIVE JOURNEY” by DUVALL AND HAYS**

(of Ouachita Baptist University)



1. Grasp the Text in their Town  
         *What did the text mean to the biblical audience?*  
2. Measuring the Width of the River to Cross  
        *What are the differences between the biblical audience and us?*  
3. Cross the Principlizing Bridge  
        *What is the theological principle in this text?*

The principle should…

- be reflected in the text.

- be timeless and not tied to a specific situation.

- not be bound to one particular culture.

- correspond to the teaching of the rest of Scripture.

- be relevant to both the biblical audience and the contemporary

audience.

4. Consult the Biblical Map  
         *How does our theological principle fit with the rest of the Bible?*

- Is your principle consistent with the rest of Scripture?

- Do other portions of Scripture add insight or qualification to the

principal?

5. Grasping the Text in Our Town  
         *How should individual Christians today apply the theological principle in*

*their lives?*

\* And, obviously, answer the WHO?, WHAT?, WHERE?, WHEN?, WHY? and

HOW/HOW MUCH? of the text.

**Commandment #9:**

**Guard Your Closest Relationships**

INTRO: While Jesus was the friend of all sinners, He Himself had an inner

circle of close friends; ***see John 15:15***.

TEXT: ***2Timothy 4:9-21***

Our family is usually chosen for us; while we are given our family, we decide whether to nurture those family relationships.

Our friends are usually those we choose… and we decide whether to nurture those friend relationships.

But, an oft-neglected relationship that is so important for ministers is that of the mentor/mentee.

ILL: According to Homer’s Odyssey, when King Odysseus went off

to fight in the Trojan war, he left his son Telemachus in the hands of a wise old man named Mentor. Mentor was charged with the task of teaching the young man wisdom.

More than 2,000 years after Homer, a French scholar and theologian by the name of François Fénelon adapted the story of Telemachus in a novel titled *Télémaque*. In it, he enlarged the character of Mentor.

The word *mentor* came to mean “a wise and responsible tutor” - an experienced person who advises, guides, teaches, inspires, challenges, corrects, and serves as a model.

***2Timothy 2:2*** describes spiritual mentoring, and the Bible gives us many examples. Timothy had Paul; Mark had Barnabas; Joshua had Moses; Elisha had Elijah.

But what about today? Who will love and work with new Christians and help them grow spiritually strong? Who will encourage, guide, and model the truth for them? Who will call young believers to accountability and work with God to help mold their character?

Will you become one whom God can use to impart wisdom and to help others grow toward maturity?

 *Who has helped you to grow in your faith?*

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*By teaching, example, or friendship?*

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Paul entered into many relationships that were useful to his ministry and for the gospel. Our text reveals what we should look for in those relationships we choose…

I. **Those Who Are “*Brethren*”** (2Tim. 4:21)

Paul offered wisdom about choosing relationships:

- “*Withdraw yourself*” from negative influences (1Tim. 6:5; 2Tim. 3:5)

- Befriend those of like mind (2Cor. 6:14; Amos 3:3)

II. **Those Who Are Givers… and not just Takers** (v.11)

Luke gave up a life of privilege to minister to Paul and the church. He was a giver.

III. **Those You Can Trust** (v.12)

Tychicus was entrusted to deliver at least 2 of Paul’s letters (Eph. 6:21-24; Col. 4:7-18). Paul considered him a true friend.

ILL: Two travelers were on the road together, when a bear suddenly

appeared on the scene. Before the bear noticed them, one made for a tree, climbed up into the branches, and hid. The other could not escape, so he laid on the ground and pretended to be dead. The bear came up and sniffed all around him, while the traveler kept perfectly still and held his breath. The bear took him for a corpse, and went away. When the coast was clear, the traveler in the tree came down, and asked the other what it was the bear had whispered to him when he put his mouth to his ear. The other replied, ”He told me to never again travel with a friend who deserts you at the first sign of danger.” (The Book of Virtues by Wm. J. Bennett)*.*

IV. **Those Who Challenge You** (v.19)

Priscilla & Aquilla were good for Paul. ***See Prov. 27:17***.

CONCL:

*Who are your close family relationships?*

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*Who are your close friend relationships?*

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*What is the value of a mentor/mentee relationship:*

*- for the mentee?*

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*- for the mentor?*

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 *To whom can you be a mentor?*

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**Commandment #10:**

**Never Quit!**

INTRO: Ignace Jan Paderewski, the famous pianist, was scheduled to

perform at a great concert hall in America. It was a high-society event. Present in the audience that evening was a mother and her fidgety 9-year old; she had brought him hoping that, when he heard the great composer play, he would be encouraged to practice.  
As the mother turned to talk with some friends, her son slipped away and was strangely drawn to the grand Steinway piano on the platform. Staring wide-eyed at the keys, the boy sat on the stool; placed his small fingers on the keys and began to play “Chopsticks.” The roar of the crowd came to a hush as frowning faces pointed in his direction. Some in the crowd shouted, “Get that boy away from there!” “Where is his mother?” “Somebody get that kid.”  
Backstage, the master composer overheard the sounds out front. He quickly realized what was happening and hurried toward the stage. Without one word of announcement, he stooped over behind the boy, reached around on both sides, and began to improvise a counter-melody to harmonize with - and enhance - “Chopsticks.” As they played together, the composer kept whispering in the boy’s ear, “Keep going; don’t quit. Keep playing; don’t stop. Don’t quit….”  
It is much the same for us as we work for the Lord. Our playing of “Chopsticks” may not be impressing anyone. But, about the time we’re ready to give up, we hear the Master say, “Keep going; don’t stop; never quit.”  
(Charles Swindoll, “Don’t Quit,” Stories for the Heart compiled by Alice Gray [Sisters Oregon: Multnomah Books, 1996] p.39,40).

TEXT: ***2Timothy 4:1-18***

Paul issued a challenge…

I. **Fight the Good Fight** (v.7)

As “*soldiers*” we must “*endure hardness*” (2Tim. 2:3; 4:5)

- Difficult Circumstances (v.6)

Paul remained faithful while facing the death penalty.

ILL: Perseverance is not a long race; it is many short races

one after another.

- Difficult People

\* Some people will disappoint us (v.10)

\* Some people will intentionally hurt us (v.14-16)

But, remember the One who enlisted you (2Tim. 2:3,4).

APP: The difference between quitting and continuing will – many

times – be a matter of focus. Are you focused on the difficult circumstances and difficult people, or are you focused on your Commanding Officer?

II. **Stay the Course**

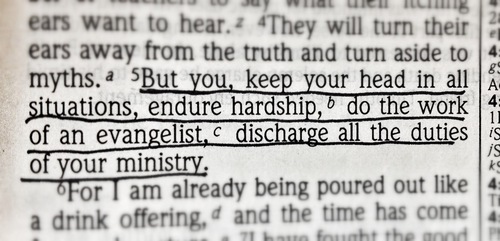
Paul followed the course laid out for him by the Lord.

- “*Fulfill your ministry*” (v.2,5; 2Tim. 1:8-12; 4:17,18)

- Give an account of your service (v.1,8)

APP: ***2Tim. 4:5*** is a verse every minister should have memorized…

and should follow every day!



III. **Keep the Faith** (v.3-5)

- Others may “*not endure*” (v.3,4)

- But “*you be watchful*” (v.5)

CONCL: There is a scene from the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* TV

series… Worf, the Klingon, is captured by the evil Dominion. They intend to use him as a practice dummy in hand-to-hand combat for their lethal ground troops, and they do. They bring out soldier after soldier to take Worf on and they go at it. It’s never very long before the bad guys get tired of getting beat up, and they "tap out" and quit. So, after Worf’s been taking on all comers for most of the day, they finally bring out their biggest and baddest, the one warrior they know will be able to win. They begin to battle, and Worf is just too weak from the day’s struggles. He is little more than a punching bag for the bad guy to work out on. But Worf will not "tap out" like all the other beaten soldiers. He keeps getting up, no matter how many times he is knocked down, no matter how injured he is. He simply will not quit. It is obvious that this valiant warrior has won the respect and admiration of all the Dominion troops, including the one now beating him up. They all begin to beg him to tap out and quit, but he will not. Finally, out of sheer exasperation, the warrior who is beating him stops and "taps out" himself. When asked by his enraged commander why he has done this, he says, "I cannot defeat this man. I can only kill him."  
I don’t know about you, but my goal is to hear the devil himself say those words about me some day.

I will not tap out. How about you?

**“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses,**

**Commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”**

**- 2Timothy 2:2**