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**TIMOTHY AND PAUL**

**Passing on:** Knowledge and example

**What a mentor does:** teaches

**Scriptures to study:** 1 Timothy 4:12, Philippians 4:9, Philippians 3:17, 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9, 1 Corinthians 11:1, 1 Corinthians 15:10, Philippians 3:8, 2 Corinthians 11:23-28, Ephesians 4:15-16

**Key thoughts:**

* Paul was acquainted with the practice of mentoring as a senior member of the Jewish religious leadership, and mentored others throughout his ministry, often telling men to follow his example.
* Paul gave Timothy extensive instruction and knowledge in how to follow Jesus through his letters.
* Paul’s mentoring was encouraging at times, and also tough/no-nonsense.

In a mentoring relationship, perhaps the two most valuable aspects that can be shared are knowledge and example. Knowledge is what the mentor knows through learning and experience. An example is a mentor’s life and actions, which are of high moral and ethical character and fit to be imitated. As the writer of half of the New Testament, Paul’s letters to churches and individuals are filled with page after page of wise instruction. Through his preaching, mission work, service to others and encouragement, Paul also presents a powerful example to follow.

No early Christ-follower knew the powerful nature of mentoring better than the Apostle Paul. He positioned himself as someone to be observed and followed, writing, “Imitate me as I imitate Christ”. Before Timothy, Paul was mentored by Barnabas, so we have multiple examples in Paul’s life of mentoring relationships. In his letters, Paul explained in detail the merits of the Christian faith, how Christians were to live and grow in Christ, and how Jesus fulfilled prophecies and was indeed Israel’s awaited Messiah. His letters to Timothy were filled with practical instruction and insight. Paul’s mentorship was so profound that he continued to influence and instruct Timothy even while imprisoned in Rome.



* What is something that you learned early in life “the hard way”—an experience that cost you or was painful, but taught you something valuable?
* What is something that someone has taught you early in your life that you carry with you to this day?
* How do you know if someone is wise? What about them will tell you that they have knowledge and experience to mentor you or others?



* Read Philippians 4:9. What was Paul’s advice to leaders about being worried or anxious?
* Read Philippians 3:17. What does Paul say about whose example to follow? What kind of person are we to keep our eyes on as an example?
* Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-28. Why does Paul give this list of the hardships of his life? What are those he is mentoring to learn from this account?
* Read 1 Timothy 4:12. What advice does Paul give to his younger mentee, Timothy? Why might this advice be important for us today?
* Read 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9. This is another instance of Paul setting an example to follow. Why was it important to Paul to work hard and not be a burden to others?



* What are one or two practical actions you can take from the Apostle Paul as mentoring examples? How can you “imitate Paul as he imitates Christ”?
* What is a key characteristic or trait that you can pass down to someone who is younger than you? Why is this of particular importance to a young person?
* List a few things you want to be sure your children or grandchildren know as they grow up—remember you can still be teaching your children even when you are both adults! Have you taken every opportunity to mentor those in your immediate circle that are younger than you?