

# Mentoring Hearts, Changing Lives

—AN ATHLETE STUDY OF 2<sup>ND</sup> TIMOTHY

## DON'T JUST LOOK AT IT

There's a story of a poor man who lived in a shack. The only thing the man owned was an inherited plot of land and the meager dwelling. One day, he was informed that a roadway needed to pass right through his land. The city paid considerably more than the land was worth—more money than this man had ever seen in his life. More than enough to buy a home, furnish it, and pretty much anything else the man would want.

Road crews noticed during the construction that the man continued living in his tiny shack. The project manager's curiosity got the better of him. He went and asked the man why he still chose to live in the shack asking, "Didn't you get the check?" The man pointed to a frame on the wall. Inside the frame was the check.

Last Week we considered the greatest resource available to believers for obedience and victory—God's Word. Consider though, how many copies of the Bible sit in homes across America on coffee tables, shelves, and nightstands just gathering dust. Just like the fool framing the check, too many people remain impotent to endure hardship, face false teaching, and see lives changed by the gospel—including their own. They have everything they need to win their fight, but the sword remains sheathed (Ephesians 6:17).

### 2 TIMOTHY 4:1–8

<sup>1</sup> I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: <sup>2</sup> preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. <sup>3</sup> For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, <sup>4</sup> and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. <sup>5</sup> As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

<sup>6</sup> For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

"Watch your tone, be teachable, and you can disagree on some things without disagreeing on everything." Although the article in the QR code wasn't written for teenagers, it's worth your time.

More than any generation before, you all will deal with "people [who] will not endure sound teaching, but have itching ears." How do we discern truth from falsehood when attracting eyeballs, clicks, and how we *feel* is more important than truth? Scan the QR code.



## DISCUSSION

If your only source was your social media feed, what would you assume is the goal of life?

1. To whom is Timothy (and us) ultimately held accountable? (1)

2. Summarize the difficult situation that stands in Timothy's way. (3-4)

3. Due to his faithfulness, what does Paul anticipate receiving? (8)

4. According to this passage, but in your own words, on what does a dedicated follower focus their life?

5. In what ways should eternal rewards motivate you as you consider the investment of your life?

ICEBREAKER

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Do you struggle to reconcile what the Bible clearly teaches versus what you hear at school, online, or from friends? Biblical love is sometimes hard. Talk to your Coach today!



# Mentoring Hearts, Changing Lives

—AN ATHLETE STUDY OF 2<sup>ND</sup> TIMOTHY



## STUDY NOTES THE LUCKIEST MAN

On May 2, 1939, after 15 years and 2,130 consecutive Yankee games, Lou Gehrig, “The Iron Horse,” ended his legendary career. Just two months later, on July 4, 1939—diagnosed with the fatal disease, ALS—Gehrig delivered his equally legendary speech. Gehrig addressed his packed stadium, “Fans, for the past two weeks you have been reading about the ‘bad break’ I got. Yet today, I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of this earth.” How could he say that with a shattered career, weakened body, and death on the horizon? He saw his blessings as a *privilege* not a *right*. That’s the perspective of humility, grace, and gratitude.

As Paul brings his final letter to a close, he’s not complaining about his “bad break.” He’s not going on about injustice or proclaiming innocence. Instead, he’s giving Timothy the final marching orders. He sums up everything he’s previously discussed. The mentor releasing his disciple upon the world to carry on the legacy of the “luckiest man.”

## MENTORING HEARTS WILL GROW HEARTS

Although the mentor/disciple relationship may last a lifetime, we must commission those we disciple to send them beyond the comfort of our shadow. Like a baby bird shoved from the nest, our disciples must be sent to go do the work of ministry. Paul formally stated as though in a courtroom, “***I charge you in the presence of God and of Jesus Christ.***” This is a formal declaration, based on two truths sourced in God’s character, that it’s he “***who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom.***”

Paul charged Timothy first and foremost, “***Preach the word.***” *Preaching* it implies *knowing* it. It requires *preparation* so that the disciple of Christ may ***be ready in season and out of season.*** What must we be ready to do? We must ***reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.*** Why? ***For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.***

Paul’s words ring even more true today as people watch the news and scroll social media in their own “echo chambers.” Everything we see and hear online has been curated by algorithms to amplify or reinforce what we already believe. We’re so often exposed to ideological extremes that the “other

side” seems, not just incorrect, but maliciously nuts. Spiritually, politically, culturally, musically, etc. the internet provides an endless supply of “influencers,” or as Paul says, “teachers,” leading people away from truth.

In light of these people, Paul charged Timothy, “***As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.***” As a disciple, as a leader, you need to learn to think, to suffer, to witness regarding the hope you have, and succeed in God’s calling. That calling isn’t about wealth or status. It’s about life-change. You cannot do any of these things on your own. Success can only be found through time spent in God’s Word preparing yourself for the challenges ahead.

## WE MUST GROW OUR HEARTS FOR CHRIST

Paul examined his own circumstances, “***For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.***” In Week 5, we examined Paul’s three-part illustration of the soldier, athlete, and farmer. We discussed how each role faced hardship receiving reward only after significant investment. Paul fulfilled the obligations of all three: “***I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.***” Paul accomplished those things he encouraged Timothy to do. He went on, “***Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.***”

Paul looked forward to the *crown* he would receive having competed according to the rules (see 2 Timothy 2:5). As stated in Week 5, the rules weren’t just about how to play the game—it’s about a birthright, training, an oath, and the relentlessness of the race. Paul looked forward to the crown purchased by the righteousness of Christ who gave his life for sinners. Perhaps, as Paul considered the end of his life, and the crown that awaited him, he remembered the life that ended at the beginning of his ministry journey.

In Week 1, we shared Paul’s conversion story on the heels of the stoning of Stephen. Stephen was martyred for his faith in Acts 7. The name Stephen comes from the Greek word “*stephanos*” translated, “crown.” Paul’s reflected on the journey bookended by death and a crown. The persecutor becoming the persecuted. Imagine Paul’s gratitude for God answering the prayer of a dying man as Stephen prayed, “***Lord, do not hold this sin against them***” (Acts 7:60).