

# The Making of a Disciple Maker

2 Timothy 2:1-13



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A long life...a faithful life...a sacrificial life...a life that ends with an imprisonment and judgment deserves imitation. The Apostle Paul lived this life and Pastor Timothy imitated this life. However, if the only faithful, sacrificial, mistreated life we see in the swan song (2 Timothy 4:6-8) letter of Paul to Timothy—which we refer to as Second Timothy—is Paul’s, then we miss the very hope of both he and his student. Their hope surpassed any sense of self-importance. Their hope erupted from, in, and for His Majesty, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Here’s how Paul said it in his opening salvo of 2nd Timothy:

- 8 *Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God,*
- 9 *who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,*
- 10 *and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,*
- 11 *for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher,*
- 12 *which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.*
- 13 *Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*

In fact, the very thing Paul wanted for Timothy in this final letter was summarized in 1:13, “*Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*” This is the very heart of a follower of Jesus...a disciple and a disciple maker...the implementation of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20).

**Transition:** So, what does this look like? Well, let’s take a look at chapter two of 2nd Timothy to see a condensed description and explanation of disciple making.



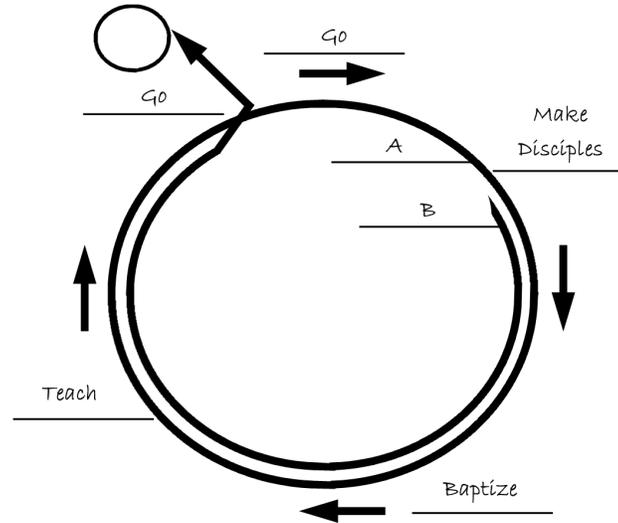
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The Making of a Disciple Maker

**Theme: If you desire to make disciples run the risk of faithfulness and sacrifice.**

**First: Running the risk of faithfulness and sacrifice assumes one will pass it all on. 2:1,2**

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



The Great Commission circle represents one believer (A) reaching another person (B) for Christ, assisting that person to mature in her faith, and sending her into the harvest field to do the same.

## Matthew 28:16-20

**A.** If one desires to pass it all on he must be *strengthened* by the grace that is in Jesus. vs. 1

This is one of the Apostle Paul's preferred ways (especially with Timothy) to describe abiding in Jesus. The word *strengthened* is a present passive imperative verb...which is a technical way of saying: "Timothy, your continued daily strength cannot be mustered up. You just can't do it. It must come from the Savior...from his grace...from him, Timothy...and him alone. Your relationship with Jesus is everything!"

**B.** If one desires to pass it all on he must *entrust* the whole "good news package" to other faithful people...who will also do the same. vs. 2

What does it mean to entrust something of ultimate importance...seriously, the ultimately paramount most important thing ever!? It means—as Jesus did with the first disciples and the apostles did with many others—

we commit it all to others,  
we deposit the whole of it into others,  
we invest the totality of it with others.

How do we get this done? We do it by accepting the invitation to abide and accepting the premise that in abiding with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit we are going to do as God does. What is important to one member of the Trinity is completely important to the other two. It must be equally so with us (see John chapters 12 through 17).

## Second: Running the risk of faithfulness and sacrifice requires endurance. vss. 3-13

10 *Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.*

In Paul and Timothy's context, what exactly did it mean to endure (see also verse 12)? It meant to abide...to remain...

...to stay with the Lord,  
...to hang onto the Lord,  
...to cleave to the Lord.

In fact, the word given here to the Apostle Paul, is the same word Jesus used as he shared those last hours with his first disciples...abide, remain (John 14 and 15). However, it was nuanced with a prefix. The prefix added to the word abide was an addition that meant "under, in, with, among." A Christ follower can only remain faithful—especially in troubled times—if he or she walks in harmony with the Lord. And one can only walk in harmony with the Lord if one remains in communication with him.

**A.** If one chooses to endure he must embrace the hardships of sacrifice. vss. 3-7

3 *Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.*

4 *No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.*

5 *An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.*

6 *It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops.*

7 *Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.*

The phrase "*share in suffering*," that we see in verse three, is actually just one word. It means to suffer or to be afflicted by troubles or hardships. The apostle pointed to three examples of what this looks like:

a soldier who single-mindedly avoids civilian affairs in order to please his commander,  
an athlete who tenaciously competes according to the rules in order to win,  
and a farmer who works very hard in order to receive the first share of the crop.

This is powerful imagery. It literally could be the text of one's calling card...or banner, or coat of arms.

Like the Savior,  
~I am committed to something much  
bigger than myself  
~I embrace sacrifice on behalf of  
something much bigger than myself



**B.** If one chooses to endure he must look first to Jesus, but also to others who have faithfully followed Jesus. vss. 8-13

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

Not only did the Apostle Paul instruct Timothy to “*remember Jesus Christ,*” but he also said “*for which I am suffering.*” However, he did not simply describe the what regarding their examples, he also explained why...

...because even if a believer may be in chains, “*the word of God is not bound,*”

...because enduring hardships is “*for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.*”

Wow! What else can matter when the weight of eternal salvation rests upon the life-saving message regarding the person and work of the Savior?

- Can earthly status matter?           No!
- Can earthly security matter?       No!
- Can earthly significance matter?   No!

Yet someone might still be inclined to ask, “Why?” Why must a condition of complete and total surrender be received from God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? In anticipation of this question, the Holy Spirit of God inspired the Apostle of God to compose the following psalm (vss. 11-13):

*A faithful word...*

- If we died with,           we will also live with.*
- If we endure,            we will also reign with.*
- If we deny,               he will also deny us.*
- If we believe not,       he abides faithfully,*  
*he cannot deny himself.*

The old person dies when the born again spirit is miraculously received in salvation.  
The new person reigns when when through abiding he or she endures faithfully.

However, there are some who never were...

The person who denies will be found out via the Lord’s denial of him or her.  
The person who does not believe does not diminish the Lord’s faithfulness.

The author of faith and the receiver of faith are intended for an abiding, real, dynamic relationship.

# The Making of a Disciple Maker

2 Timothy 2:14-26



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As the Apostle Paul continued to share with Timothy more of the necessary ingredients of becoming a great disciple maker, he was inspired by God to move (as he often did) from his pastoral perspective to his prophetic perspective. The pastoral role sees the disciple maker leaning into someone's life offering support, encouragement, admonishment. It's the shepherd's nurturing instincts at work. The prophetic role sees the disciple maker standing tall with someone offering a clear "thus saith the Lord." It's the shepherd's protective instincts at work. A disciple maker must not only know how to lead as a servant via teaching, training, warning, encouraging, supporting, and helping, he also needs to know how to lead people away from problematic, sinful concepts, attitudes, behavior, and choices. In this role, the pastor is not foretelling the future, he's forthtelling the corrective truth of God.

- 14 *Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers.*
- 15 *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.*
- 16 *But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness,*
- 17 *and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus,*
- 18 *who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some.*
- 19 *But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."*

**Transition:** So, what does this look like? Well, let's take a look at 2 Timothy 2:14-26 to see a condensed description and explanation of this aspect of disciple making.

**Theme:** If you desire to make disciples run the risk of gently saying the hard stuff.



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The Making of a Disciple Maker: Part Two

**First: Running the risk of gently saying the hard stuff requires a demeanor and disposition derived from the character of Jesus. 2:14-19**

**A.** When our demeanor and disposition are derived from the character of Jesus opportunities for fulfilling God's desire begin. vs. 14

What opportunities? The opportunity of Second Timothy Chapter One, rather than a bunch of theological rabbit trails. Let's take a moment to read it...then we'll come back and take a quick look at rabbit trails.

Wow!

- When we seize these opportunities we avoid the palaver and get to the main thing. vss. 14, 16-18

*...not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers  
...avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness  
...their talk will spread like gangrene  
...swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened  
...they are upsetting the faith of some*

It's interesting and important to note that much of the palaver going on in the Church of Ephesus was actually about important doctrine. In this present context it centered on a false teaching regarding the resurrection. So, what was going on? Isn't it appropriate to stop false teaching? Isn't it right to ensure sound doctrine? Yes and yes. However, **how** one goes about this is just as essential as that one goes about it. We can't *quarrel*. We can't indulge in *irreverent babble*. We simply cannot afford being side-tracked by the Hymenaeus' and Philetus' of the world.

- When we seize these opportunities we must, ourselves, avoid the palaver. vss. 15, 16a

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. But avoid irreverent babble...*

This is the practical outworking of what Paul implored Timothy to do back in 1:13,14: *"Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you."* Of course, we need to engage our cultures and our churches with the ability of discerning and discussing the times, but not with imperceptive, insensitive, elongated altercations. Instead, we need simply to teach the truth...winsomely, articulately, and sufficiently. We must be guided by *"the faith and love that are in Christ"* and *"by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us."* Now that's a pretty simple measuring rod. Can you walk away from such a conversation answering "Yes" to this question..."Is it absolutely true they saw the love and faith of God the Son and God the Holy Spirit in me?" Alas, I for one fall short far too often. I'm still learning..."I can't and I don't want to, but I want to and I'm afraid I will."

**B.** When our demeanor and disposition are derived from the character of Jesus opportunities are ripe for standing upon "God's firm foundation." vs. 19



**Second: Running the risk of gently saying the hard stuff requires our willing participation to avoid being dishonorable vessels for God by becoming and remaining honorable vessels for God. 2:20,21**

20 *Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable.*

21 *Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.*

God's house is a big, big house...with lots and lots of rooms (sorry, I couldn't resist that). It has stuff in it. Some of that stuff is consecrated. It's made for honor...like gold and silver vessels. Some of the stuff can be ordinary, less than consecrated. It's not in a position of honor...like wood and clay vessels...kind of like garbage cans. The task of being a disciple maker—being like Timothy or Paul or, most importantly, like Jesus—is to be honorable. The task is to seize every opportunity to gently, from love and faith and abiding in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, silence the palaver lovers not merely with speech, but with careful, captivating, absorbing, conversation.

**Third: Running the risk of gently saying the hard stuff requires our rapt attention and perfection in all of this...so let's go over it one more time. 2:22-26**

**A.** Our rapt attention to all of this is once again solicited...in a series of commands. vss.22-23

Here's the marching orders...really, truly the marching orders. The Holy Spirit led Paul to write a series of commands reiterating what all the above looks like. It can't be missed. It shouldn't be missed. It must not be missed.

22 *So **flee** youthful passions and **pursue** righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*

~flee and pursue are present imperative verbs

23 *But **refuse** foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels.*

~refuse is a present imperative verb

**B.** Our rapt attention to all of this is once again solicited...in a series of explanations. vss. 24-26

24 *And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil,*

25 *correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth,*

26 *and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.*

Beautiful, compassionate, tender, enlightening, persevering...so reconciliation occurs. Just like Jesus.



# The Making of a Disciple Maker

2 Timothy 3:1-17



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As the Apostle Paul continued to share with Timothy more of the necessary ingredients of becoming a great disciple maker, he transitioned yet again. This time, in 3:1-17, he provided motivation regarding the need to be alert to the signs of the times. Like the renowned men of Issachar, “men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, 200 chiefs, and all their kinsmen under their command” (1 Chronicles 12:32), a disciple maker must have the ability to “see” the times in which he lives. In the telling of the transition between King Saul and King David, a simple list of all the tribes of Israel was recorded in 1 Chronicles. Nothing much is said of the other tribes, but in one powerful sentence all the world can read about what set the men of Issachar apart. The same must be said of disciple makers.

Here’s how Paul was inspired by the Lord to point this truth out to Timothy...

- 1 *But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.*
- 6 *For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,*
- 3 *heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good,*
- 4 *treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,*
- 5 *having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.*
- 6 *For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions,*
- 7 *always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.*
- 8 *Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith.*
- 9 *But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.*
- 10 *You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness,*
- 11 *my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me.*
- 12 *Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,*



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The Making of a Disciple Maker: Part Three

- 13 *while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.*
- 14 *But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it*
- 15 *and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*
- 16 *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,*
- 17 *that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

**Theme: If you desire to make disciples stay alert to the signs of the times by remaining fully engaged with God’s word. 3:1-17**

**First: Staying alert to the signs of the times by remaining fully engaged with God’s word requires that we see clearly the attributes of spiritual death. 3:1-9**

The description Paul offered in verses one through nine is ugly at it’s core. It reminds us of the days in which we live. It also provides a vivid description of God’s judgment akin to the one delivered in Romans 1:18-32.

List the characteristics of 2 Timothy 3:1-9

List the characteristics of Romans 1:18-32

**Question:** What does this tell us about our own times?

**Question:** How can a disciple maker keep this in plain sight?

**Question:** How might this influence what a disciple maker chooses to act upon?

**Second: Staying alert to the signs of the times by remaining fully engaged with God's word requires that we never become theoretical inerrantists. 3:10-17**

It's one thing to accept the premise that the Bible is the true word of God, it's another thing to live faithfully according to this truth. In fact, this belief is so important true Christians write doctrinal statements to express and affirm just how much we believe in the veracity and reliability of the Bible being the one true revelation of God. Here's the doctrinal state adopted both by WSCC and our denomination, the North American Baptist Conference.

“We believe the Bible is God's Word given by divine inspiration, the record of God's revelation of Himself to humanity (II Timothy 3:16). It is trustworthy, sufficient, without error—the supreme authority and guide for all doctrine and conduct (I Peter 1:23-25; John 17:17; II Timothy 3:16-17.) It is the truth by which God brings people into a saving relationship with Himself and leads them to Christian maturity (John 20:31, I John 5:9-12; Matthew 4:4; I Peter 2:2).”

Further, since accommodation to the world has proven to be so trendy throughout the history of the church, true evangelical believers have, from time to time, doubled down on doctrinal statements regarding the Bible with ever more clarity. Often used in these statements are the following words: inspired, revelation, historical, plenary, verbal, inerrant, infallible, authoritative, original autograph.

Here's what they mean:

- inspired: not like “I felt inspired,” but the actual work of God in the life of the prophets and apostles as he moved and caused them to speak and write exactly what he wanted; the God-breathed word of God
- revelation: the body of truth delivered by God via inspiration
- historical: the body of truth delivered by God via inspiration came during specific historical periods and settings
- plenary: all of the Bible—every part of it—is inspired by God
- verbal: each word, the grammar and structure of the words, all of it in its entirety—every jot and tittle—is inspired by God
- inerrant: without error
- infallible: in fact the word of God cannot contain error (because God is infallible, his word will always be without error; all that God inspired is infallible both in content and practice
- authoritative: the final matter on all matters; all that is addressed in the word of God is true and reliable—it is the ultimate “determinator”
- original autograph: the original documents produced by the prophets and apostles...not copies

**A.** If we desire to avoid becoming theoretical inerrantists we must abide (remain, continue, stay, live with, reside with, relate to) in God's word. 3:14

While 3:10-13, a reminder of the contrast between the way of the Lord and the ways of the world, sets up what Paul wanted from Timothy, and 3:15-17 describes the content of what Paul desired Timothy to live by, the actual instruction Paul gave to Timothy in this passage is found in verse fourteen, "*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it.*"

What had Timothy learned and believed? Answer: the word of God...

15 *and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

What was Timothy instructed to do with the word of God? He was taught to "continue" in it. The NIV translation here is agreed upon by the translators of the KJV, NKJV, NASV, ESV, HCSB, NET, and the LSB, but is translated with the English word "abide" in the American Standard Version and "be remaining" in Young's Literal Translation. Why is this? Do the translators mean something different with these three translations? No. Here's the deal. The original Greek word is "meno." This was the word of choice used by the Savior (and recorded so adeptly in the Gospel of John) when over and over again he encouraged and exhorted the disciples to abide in him, his love, his word, and his work, just as he abided in his Father, his Father's love, his Father's word, and his Father's work.

What good is it, then, to acknowledge the source of the Bible, but not live "by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:1-4)?

- 1 *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.*
- 2 *And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.*
- 3 *And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread."*
- 4 *But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God'" (quoting from Deuteronomy 8:3.*

**B.** If we desire to avoid becoming theoretical inerrantists we will be transformed by God's word. 3:16,17

16 *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,*

17 *that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*