

Spiritual Fathering

2 Timothy 2:1

You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Paul often spoke of the close relationship that he had with Timothy. You can hear the endearment between them in Paul's words.

1Co 4:17 For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.

Php 2:22 But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel.

1Ti 1:2 To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

1Ti 1:18 This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare,

2Ti 1:2 To Timothy, a beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

But Timothy was not the only one. Paul does not write as much to or about Titus but still he uses the same words to describe their relationship.

Titus 1:4 To Titus, a true son in our common faith:

As a matter of fact I think we are to understand that there were many young men in Paul's. one that he speaks of was the run-away slave Onesimus.

Phm 1:10 I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains,

But there were a number of men listed by Paul at the end of his letters.

Romans 16: 20 Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater

22 Tertius

23 Gaius, Erastus, Quartus,

1 Cor 16: Apollos,

15 Stephanas

15 Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus

19 Aquila and Priscilla

Php. 4:18 Epaphroditus

Col. 4:7 Tychicus

10 Aristarchus, Mark

11 Jesus who is called Justus.

12 Epaphras,

14 Luke the beloved physician

1 Thess 1:1 Silvanus

2 Tim 4:19 Prisca and Aquila, Onesiphorus

20 Erastus, Trophimus

21 Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren.

How many more do you suppose there were that never made it into the few letters that Paul wrote over the many years of his ministry? I dare say there were many.

Paul was without doubt the mentor of dozens if not hundreds. These were not the normal church members. These were the ones that Paul poured his life into.

- I. Mentoring is difficult because pride says, I don't need anyone to show me.
 - A. If you want to see rebellion just try to tell a 4 year old what to do.
 - 1. That is where we got the idea of reverse child psychology.
 - 2. If you want them to do something just tell them not to do it and they will.
 - 3. Sorry to say that some 40 year olds do the same thing.
 - 4. It is pride and rebellion.
 - 5. I have seen the same rebellion in the eyes of some who sat across the desk from me as I have seen in that 4 year old.
 - 6. I don't believe that I can remember a time when it turned out well.
 - B. But these men had laid aside their own self interest for the cause of Jesus Christ.
 - C. Pr 15:5 A fool despises his father's instruction, But he who receives correction is prudent.
- II. God made us to need wise counsel in order to make it.
 - A. None of us has the wisdom needed on our own.
 - B. Pr 1:5 A wise man will hear and increase learning, And a man of understanding will attain wise counsel,
 - C. Pr 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise.
 - D. Pr 19:20 Listen to counsel and receive instruction, That you may be wise in your

latter days.

III. Satan understands the effectiveness of mentoring.

A. He has a whole army of mentors.

1. Men and women, boys and girls who are more than willing to give the wrong advice.
2. The gangs in our cities and schools are all about mentoring.
3. Some of the children in your school have been mentored at home in all the wrong ways and when they meet with your children they will mentor them.
4. Paul understood this principle and spoke of it in Romans 1
 - a. 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

B. I wish that God's people were as sincere and purposeful in their efforts as the sons of darkness are in theirs.

1. Remember the parable that Jesus once told to illustrate this.
2. Luke 16:1-17 He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. 2 "So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' 3 "Then the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. 4 'I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.' 5 "So he called every one of his master's debtors to him, and said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6 "And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' So he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' 7 "Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' So he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' 8 "So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light.
3. By reducing what they were obligated to pay his master, he put them under obligation to him. Reciprocation was an integral part of Jewish society; if someone did a person a favor, that person was obligated to do one for him. MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Luke 11-17.
4. The conclusion in verse 8 is quite striking.
5. The master commends his own wicked unjust steward because he acted

wisely or shrewdly.

6. In the words of a famous missionary, he gave up what he could not keep to gain what he could not lose.

IV. Didn't and doesn't Jesus mentor?

- A. He mentored the original 12 and set them up to mentor others.
 1. Mr 1:17 Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men."
- B. Doesn't he mentor us through the word of God and the thing He brings into our lives?
- C. We than ought to mentor our children.
- D. But we also ought to mentor one another and if we can, if we have the opportunity, we ought to mentor others also.
- E. Jesus understood that mentoring must be intentional.
 1. He didn't simply live His life and hope that others would follow Him.
 2. He picked from those baptized by John a core group to follow Him.
- F. God gives us opportunities to lead and guide in the lives of others.
 1. That is a great responsibility and a great privilege.
 2. That is part of what AWANA is about.
 3. That is what VBS is about.
 4. We have an opportunity to influence the lives of these children while they are young.
 5. We will never get that opportunity again.
 6. Is there someone in your life that God wants you to influence for the kingdom of God's sake?
 7. Does God want you to spend more time with your children, telling them the things that only a father can?
 8. Will we use the things of this life that we really cannot keep to gain those people that we will never lose?

