

Study and Commitment

Am I disciplined enough to study?

- We're in our final "Learn to Study" lesson tonight
- We've addressed...

- Study and Theology, asking: why is study important?
- Study and Growth, with the question: what can study do for me?
- Study and Discipleship, where does study fit into my relationship with Christ?
- Also, Study and Education, asking: what can I learn from study?
- Study and Fellowship, answering: who else should be involved with my study?
- Study and Trial, with the question: how does study help in difficulty?
- Study and Affections, can study change what I want?
- Study and Convictions, will study help with grey areas?
- Study and Ministry, asking: how can I use my study to reach others?
- And finally today, Study and Commitment, and the question: am I disciplined enough to study?

- We address this theme and ask this question because of passages like Joshua 1:8
- In that passage, Joshua, the leader of Israel readies himself to take on God's special mission for his life
- To lead the people of Israel into the promised land

- We have been given a special mission too
- And while it is not as specific as Joshua's mission, it often presents dangers and difficulties of a similar sort
- And so, God's words to Joshua are a reminder to us...

Joshua 1:8

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

- Our great commission must be undertaken with a similar "day and night" commitment to the word of God
- For we know success is not possible without it
- We've read numerous passages that lead us to believe this

- How then, can we maintain a commitment like Joshua did?
- Day and night meditation, combined with action

- There is a passage in 2 Timothy that might help
- In it, the Apostle Paul is writing to Timothy
- He calls Timothy his "son" in the faith
- And he says that Timothy knows the way in which he believes and lives
- Timothy also knows the trials Paul has faced
- They have been significant trials
- But the Lord has granted deliverance all along the way
- And Paul lets Timothy (and us) know that this is not unusual
- The fact is, anyone who lives in a Godly manner will face persecution

- Paul also reminds Timothy that things are getting worse, not better
- But he encourages him, by providing key instructions
- They are, to follow closely the teaching of scripture, and look to it as his rule of faith and practice

- Joshua was ready to face some difficult things when God's instructions came to him
- He was going to need the scriptures
- Not just the words of scripture
- But the character development that would come from obeying the scriptures
- And Timothy was in a similar place
- His mentor, Paul, was facing persecution
- And he would face it too

- He needed a commitment to scripture
- And I think there are some components of the passage that will help us gain or maintain that commitment ourselves
- Let's begin...

2 Timothy 3:10-11

10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,
 11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

- In the Christian life, it is always good to have a faithful example
- A person, or people we look to that model Godliness

- Of course, we are always looking to Jesus, first and foremost
 - But He intends for His people to help and disciple one another too
 - Paul was an example for Timothy
 - His doctrine, the way in which he lived, his purpose, his behavior, and his disposition all represented Christ the right way
 - But that did not mean – because he was doing the right things – that his life was easy
 - Quite to the contrary, he had faced (and was facing) fierce persecution
 - This is a prominent and key sub-plot in Paul's life
 - But these trials, wherever he went, also served as an example
 - Both of how we should react to persecution – and of the faithfulness of God
 - For he had protected and delivered Paul, or given him the means to endure
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- If we desire a commitment to scripture
 - And a commitment to obedience
 - And example is really helpful...

2 Timothy 3:12

12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

- Paul is not the only one
 - If we follow His example - as he follows Christ's example
 - We, like Timothy, will face persecution too
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- At times when it becomes clear that this will be the case
 - We need the comfort and the clarity of truth
 - That is found only in the Bible
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- What's more...

2 Timothy 3:13

13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

- Those hoping for some sort of a reprieve should think again
 - Evil men are getting worse
 - Those who deceive others are getting worse
 - They continue to deceive and often have a greater and greater degree of success
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- The battles will be hotter

- The troubles will be deeper
- The persecutions will be greater in number
- As we look toward the future

- We fight the seducing spirits and the deception with truth alone
- That means we must know the truth to recognize the lie
- And to have embraced it with our hearts
- Eager to teach others
- Living it out
- Being an example to others

- That's where Paul goes in the next two verses...

2 Timothy 3:14-15

14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;
 15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

- How then was Timothy – how are we – to proceed?
- Holding fast, continuing in the things we have learned
- In Timothy's life, this was (of course) continuing in the scriptures
- The implication is the same for believers today
- Those who have come to know Him as Savior, should be walking with Him
- Growing in His word – and as His disciple
- As part of a local New Testament church
- Where we may have fellowship and accountability together
- And strengthening ourselves and others in the scripture
- Which testify of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior

- It was the scriptures that taught us of Him
- And the scriptures that will exhort us to continue in Him
- It is our relationship with Him that will keep us there
- For nothing else tells us who He is
- And how He would have us to think and act

- We must realize what we have in the Bible...

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

- This is what we know about the scriptures
 - First they come directly from God
 - They are God-breathed
 - And they are profitable
 - For teaching us exactly what God wants us to know
 - For often reproofing us (because we so often need it)
 - For correcting us, getting us back on the right track for Him
 - And for giving us the tools we need to continue on a righteous path
 - Because it is the scriptures that perfect us
 - That provide what we need to have victory
 - They give us a foundation and enable us to know Him
 - And to walk successfully with Him
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- How do you have commitment to study?
 - Start with these things
 - Have an example
 - Understand that trouble is coming
 - Know the scriptures come from and speak of Christ
 - Realize what the scriptures are and can do
 - And know that they are designed for you
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- Do you have the commitment to study?
 - If you know and take these things into account, you will
 - He will empower you to do it