

TIP TOEING THROUGH THE TOUGH STUFF

Lesson Eight: Godly Mentors Phil 4:9

I. Godly Mentorship

A. Working definitions:

Prov. 27:17 "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."

1. "It is a dynamic relationship of trust in which one person enables another to maximize the grace of God in his/her life and serve." John Mallison
2. "An agreed-upon exchange between two people, a more experienced person and a less experienced person, developing the less experienced to his/her maximum potential in Christ and empowering him/her with abilities to meet a need, achieve a goal, or to grow through a situation." Murray and Owen

B. From one generation to the next:

Ps. 145:4 "One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts."

Ps. 71:18 "Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, my God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come."

Deut. 6:6 "These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts."

II. Paul's Mentorship

A. The content:

1. Things "learned": It's more than just an acquisition of knowledge. It is to learn with a sense of moral responsibility.
2. Things "received": It means to take into your own possession, to receive something into your mind, to accept instruction from a teacher.

I Cor. 15:1 – The gospel was "received and on which have taken your stand."

3. Things “heard”: It means to be informed, to learn with full attention.
4. Things “seen”: It means to perceive with understanding. By implication it means to “know how, to be able...” to do.

B. The instruction or activity of “mentorship”

“Do”: It means to practice as a habit, to do repeatedly, to exercise. “Keep on practicing these things!”

C. Paul has expressed this instruction in other letters.

1. Acts 20:35 “In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ”
2. 2 Thes. 3:7 “For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you,”
3. 1 Cor. 11:1 “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.”
4. 2 Tim. 1:13 “What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus.
5. 2 Tim. 2:2 “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.”
6. Phil. 3:17 “Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do.”

III. There are other biblical examples of this kind of mentorship

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|---------------------------|-------------------|
| A. Moses → Joshua | (Deut. 3:28) |
| B. Naomi → Ruth | (Ruth 1:6 – 4:22) |
| C. Elijah → Elisha | (2 Kings 2:1-16) |
| D. Mordecai → Esther | (Esther 2-9) |
| E. Barnabas → John Mark | (Acts 15:37-38) |
| F. Jesus → Twelve → Three | (Mark 3:13-19) |

IV. So what? There are two kinds of relationships we should seek out

A. Someone to pour into us. Find a mentor!

1. Consider Titus 2:1-8. Seek out an older woman who can provide a good example for you to follow
2. But be careful to not just follow people who are following Jesus. Follow Jesus. (Phil. 2:5-8)
3. Be careful who you choose. Consider the negative illustration in Luke 6:39-40. The disciple/student: has literally swallowed the spirit of his teacher. He/she is “equal to” or “like” the teacher.

B. Someone for us to pour into. Be a mentor!

Consider Heb. 3:13 “But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.”

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is it important for one generation to pass on biblical truths to the next generation? Who influenced you for good?
2. What kind of things do you think the church at Philippi learned, received, heard and saw in Paul?
3. Do you (did you ever) have a godly mentor? What kinds of things did you witness in them that you “keep on practicing”?
4. Should you be mentoring someone else? How will you pray about that this week?