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On Sunday we continued our series in 2 Timothy, considering how Timothy can persevere in ministry - despite the culture of 'wrong loves' from last week. If our loves are skewed (self, money pleasure rather than God v1-4) then ministry will be skewed as well (v5-9).

We considered the thorny topic of discipleship which can divide Christians and outlined 2 broad methods that God gives us to keep us persevering in the right way in ministry, both are simply remembering what we already know:

- follow the saints
- follow the scriptures

Follow the saints.

Paul focuses Timothy's attention upon what he **knows** in the lives of others - specifically:
a) v10 in Paul's life - he contrasts his ministry with the false-teachers - Paul perseveres, endures, loves etc because his life is not marked by a love of self, money, pleasure.
b) v14 in the lives of those who taught him the scriptures (presumably Lois and Eunice from our first week). God uses people to keep us going. We thought about the amazing opportunity we have to influence others as we live in community in church.

Follow the scriptures.

Paul now reminds Timothy where to go for help in keeping his thinking focused – what he **knows** in the scriptures. We saw that the scriptures (originally here the Old Testament but the New came later as the apostles pointed us on from Christ), which point us to Christ, is what is needed to both bring us into a relationship God, but also to grow us up in our relationship with God:

- a) bring us into - v15 they are able to make us wise for salvation - showing us our need of Jesus through the OT narrative
- b) grow us up in - v16-17 they thoroughly equip us for discipleship - teaching (positive content), rebuking (negative critique), correcting (positive again) and training in righteousness (active living for God)

Whoever we are - whether not Christian or those who have been Christians for decades - the bible is the book for us.

Here are just a few questions that might get things going, please adapt for your group:

Brainstorm all you can remember from 2 Timothy.

What have you been chewing over this last week from the letter?

How are your 'wrong-loves' expressed? How are you battling them?

Has anyone started 1 in 21?!

Why does Paul point to his own life as an example of godliness? How does it contrast with v5-9?

Are you persecuted for living for Christ? Why? Why not?

What examples from your own life of people who have influenced you?

What does your life say to others? Can they see it? What do they see?

Why are the scriptures so important as we seek to live for Jesus?

What do they do for us? How do they make us wise for salvation in Christ Jesus?

What does teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness mean?

What does it mean to be thoroughly equipped for every good work?

So why do we (generally) read them so little?

What 1 thing can you take away from these verses?