

Divine Principles for Disciples

(2 Timothy 2:1–10)

INTRODUCTION

A. Discipleship is not something just to be studied; it is to be practiced.

B. It was never intended to remain in a set of notes, neatly filed under “D.”

C. Discipleship is to be a vital part of our Christian life.

D. It is time for us to move from theory to practice.

1. Discipleship is designed for involvement.

2. With the help of Paul’s words penned in 2 Timothy 2:1–10, we want to study four(4) principles that must be applied as we begin to engage in discipleship on a regular basis.

I. THE FIRST PRINCIPLE: BE STRONG IN GRACE (2:1)

A. The arch enemy of discipleship is legalism.

1. This is where a person tries to box someone else in and make him exactly as he is.

2. Legalism is against the grace and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. You cannot have the gospel and have legalism.

a. True, there is some orthodoxy.

b. There are commands to be obeyed.

c. There are some major tenets of doctrine that cannot be compromised.

d. But a set of man-made laws and traditions treated as law and gospel will destroy a new convert.

B. What do I mean by legalism?

1. It is the rigid attitude of strict conformity to someone’s requirements in order to be admired and respected.

2. This is opposed to Christianity.

C. We must give room for each of us to grow.

1. We are all different.
2. We have different attitudes, feelings, and outlooks on life.
3. We shall all attempt to develop the mind of Christ but we must refuse to bind our attitudes on others.
4. Let us not box each other in.
5. Let us give each other room to grow.

D. We are to be strong in grace.

II. THE SECOND PRINCIPLE: CONSISTENTLY BE INVESTING IN THE LIVES OF OTHERS (2:2–6).

A. This is not to be a one-time activity, but a habit of our lives.

B. When Paul used the word *entrust*, he employed a banking term which means “to commit into a safe deposit.”

1. Disciples deposit truth into the life of someone else, where it will be safely secured.
2. According to Paul’s counsel, deposits were not to be hoarded, but in turn passed on.
3. This is the pattern of movement in discipleship.
4. “From him to me, from me to you, from you to someone else!”

C. In verse 3 we notice the metaphors Paul used in describing discipleship.

1. He said, “Endure hardships as a good soldier.”

- a. A soldier is similar to a disciple in that he has no rights.
- b. He is at the beck-and-call of his commanding officer.
- c. That is the way it is with us when we come to Christ.
- d. Soldiers dress differently.
- e. A soldier is loyal to his commanding officer.

2. The second metaphor is that of an *athlete*.

- a. There is a routine or discipline he has.

- b. There is a goal he has.
- c. A disciple has a goal and starts doing it.

3. The third metaphor is that of a *farmer*.

- a. This image depicts one who is always hard at work and occasionally is able to live off the crops he has raised.
- b. This is one of the products of working with people.
- c. They can often provide us with much needed assistance in critical times.

III. THE THIRD PRINCIPLE: PERSONALIZE THE TRUTHS YOU HAVE HEARD (2:7)

A. Do not be saying, “It is just great for the preacher to be a discipler.”

B. I want you to personalize the principles you have heard.

C. The term “consider” means to perceive in the mind, to make a mental picture.

- 1. We must perceive what the Lord is saying to us about discipleship.
- 2. We must picture it for ourselves—how we can make it a part of daily living.

D. How can I be a soul-winner?

- 1. Invite people over.
- 2. You can have dinner table evangelism.
- 3. Join with another couple and invite someone over.
- 4. Go to the jails or nursing homes.
- 5. Do it in a Bible class.
- 6. Do it at work or at a breakfast.
- 7. Just turn loose and give it a try.

IV. THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE: BE READY TO ENDURE ALL THINGS (2:8–10)

A. Paul, as our example in these matters, made it his determined purpose to endure all things.

B. Discipleship is not for the thin-skinned.

C. Once we have determined to live for others, we have to cultivate a tender spirit toward people, for often our patience will be tested to the maximum extent.

CONCLUSION

A. Isn't it about time you did something about discipleship?

B. My prayer is that God will raise up from this number a large group who will become disciples.