

Paul and Timothy: Passing the Torch

The Process of Making Disciples

Rough Transcript

Patrick Morley

Patrick Morley:

Good morning, men, and welcome to Man in the Mirror Bible Study.

So Top Gun: Maverick, how many of you guys have seen the movie yet? All right. So listen, I just was talking to Jim Angelakos, our administrator, and Keith Thomas, our vice president of good times and we thought it would be a great idea that next Friday, anybody would like to, maybe we could all meet up over at the Winter Park theater for a late matinee. The times will change from week-to-week. But right now, it's about 4:00 and see the movie Top Gun: Maverick together. How many of you would be interested in getting together late next Friday and seeing the movie? See of hands, show of hands? All right. Well, there's quite a few.

Okay. All right. So we'll do it. So we'll have some more information next Friday about the actual time, and we'll do it at the Winter Park Theater, and it'll just be kind of every man for himself. So you can get some advanced tickets if you want, or I don't know, we'll figure all that out, but anyway... We're guys. We can figure that out. It's not that complicated to go to a movie. So yeah, pretty cool, huh? Everybody's seen the movie is buzzing about it so... It is PG-13 so that's helpful. All right. Well, we have a tradition here of giving a warm welcome to the guys that are joining us online.

By the way, just so you'll know, if you haven't already heard, we're going to stop doing the Bible study online in video and only going to do it in audio starting, I don't know, sometime in the next month or two, and there are a lot of reasons for that. Basically, the production values on YouTube, we've got like 1500-plus messages on YouTube, but the production values have continued to go up exponentially over the last few years. So when we started in 2000, I mean, we were like the very top of the heap, but our production values have continued to go down.

So what we're going to be doing from now on is we're going to be taking the best of the 50 weeks that we do here and doing one series online for the spring and another series online for the fall, whether they're eight, 10, 12 messages, whatever, in each thing, and then we'll be putting those online as well. So we do have thousands of men who do the Bible study every week, but actually, only a few hundred follow with us week by week by week by week. Most of the people are just doing a series from 2019 or a series or whatever the case may be. So just a little heads up on that.

Actually, that was a spontaneous announcement. I wasn't even planning to mention that.

So we always do welcome our guys online, and we'll continue to do that because we will have men online who will be doing the podcast of it. But in a couple months, we'll stop doing the video online on a regular weekly feed. Okay. So with that said, let's give these guys their welcome this morning at the count of three, one, two, three. Hoorah. Men, welcome. We're glad to have all of you with us, wherever you are all around the world from Kenya to South Africa to Malaysia and everywhere in between.

Okay. We are doing this series, **Paul and Timothy: Passing The Torch**. Today, we're going to talk about the process of making disciples, **The Process of Making Disciples**. So I'm a one-trick pony. Making

disciples is my trick. So I can talk to you about anything you want to talk about as long as it's making disciples. I don't know anything about anything else, but this action is something about making disciples. Who is God? What is He like? Are we able to know Him personally? If so, how are we able to know Him? How do we become godly men, godly husbands, godly fathers? How do we find work that satisfies and honors God? What kind of man does God want us to become in our character, with our priorities, with our values? What kind of man does God want us to be? What does God want us to do with our lives? Are we supposed to talk to other people about God? If so, how are we supposed to do it? These are all questions that are answered through the process that we call making disciples. If not for the Bible, however, we would be left to guess at what the answers are to those questions.

Now, the first thing I want us to talk about is the text, a little bit, from 2 Timothy 3:14-17 today as a way of introducing this topic. As Paul is now writing to Timothy... This is the first half of the charge so these are the last words that Paul is giving to Timothy after all the things he said and we talked about persecution the last time. That's a normal thing for the Christian, and he goes on, "But as for you, and by implication, but as for you too, but as for all of us, "continue in what you have learned and become convinced of."

Now, this word continue is the word that is sometimes translated, abide, or abide in me and I will abide in you, or remain in me and my words will remain in you. So this is a very precious word in the larger church, the word abide here, continue. Some of the versions will say be faithful, but as for you, continue or abide in what you've learned and become convinced of because you know those from you have learned it, and how from infancy... Apparently, Timothy grew up at a Christian home. He had a Jewish mother who was a believer, and so from a very early age from infancy, he was exposed to the word of God. How from infancy you have known the scriptures.

IS THE BIBLE STILL RELEVANT?

So we have all of these questions and we have this final text here, and Paul begins this text by asking Timothy to abide in the things he has learned in the Holy Scriptures. My first question today is the Bible still relevant? Is the Bible still relevant? Well, this seems like almost a throwaway question for you here in this room, but I can assure you that the vast majority of men, and especially younger men who are just coming down the scene right now, are wondering is the Bible actually relevant? And there are good reasons for that.

This chart may be a little difficult to read, but you can certainly see the graph. This is everywhere on the internet, and there is a futurist in 1982 named Mr. Buckminster Fuller, who hypothesized that up until the year 1900, all human knowledge was doubling about every 100 years. So in the year 1900, all the information that had accumulated in the five to 6,000 years of recorded history would double over the next hundred years. But then, by 1945, knowledge was doubling every 45 years. So there was this incredible acceleration in knowledge, but then by 1982, it's estimated that knowledge was doubling about every 12 months.

About once a year, all human history, all knowledge that's been accumulated was doubling every year, but now, according to the internet, IBM apparently is the source on this. IBM predicted that by 2020, all human knowledge was doubling about every 12 hours. So about every 12 hours, all human knowledge, and this is because of, of course, the internet. So I'm Pat Morley. Can you see me? Okay, I'm Pat Morley. Now, I'm pulling out my smartphone and now who am I? I am the smartest person in the world because I now have instant access to any information about any subject anywhere in the world at any time right there at my fingertips.

So especially all of you and especially men in their twenties and thirties have this incredible amount of information. So is the Bible still relevant today? This ancient, archaic language written from 2000 years ago to 3500 years ago, is this information still relevant? Well, here's the most valuable thing to

understand, and I believe it that in the battle for men's souls, that one of the most persuasive arguments that the enemy, the devil, the deceiver, has been able to make is that things are so different now than they ever were before.

Things are so different now that they ever were before, and the Bible, it just isn't relevant anymore, and then also, on top of that, that younger generation is just so different now, and the older generation looks at the younger generation and the generational differences are exaggerated, and then the younger generation looks at the older generation and the differences are exaggerated, and we are made to believe in this battle for men's souls that we are now hopelessly different, hopelessly on different pages, and the differences, the divide, created by the differences is just so wide that it can't be.

Brothers, if you're an older guy and you're thinking about a younger guy, these are alien creatures from another planet. These are our children. That's all we're talking about, and if you're in your twenties and thirties, these older people, we're talking about your parents. We're not talking about some... Our similarities are profound. In fact, our similarities dwarf our differences, and the way to summarize this is to say this, that the core affections of the human heart are the same today as they were 6,000 years ago when recorded history began.

So yes, the cultural issues are different. There's gender confusion, what is marriage there. All these different things, and each generation has its own set of cultural issues that are interesting to them. But the core affections of the human heart are exactly the same as they have always been, and that's why a man who is 18-years-old, or a man who is 80-years-old, can pick up the Bible and read the Book of Ecclesiastes and feel like it's speaking to Him because it's speaking to the core affections of his heart, the desire to know God, the desire to be a godly man, husband, a father, the desire to find work that satisfies and honors God. All of these things.

That's why a man who is 18 or a man who is 80 can pick up the Bible and read the Sermon on the Mount and have it speak directly to the core affections of his heart. Yes, the Bible is still relevant. Brett Clemmer, when he began this series, talked about how Paul was a spiritual guide to Timothy, and he used the analogy of a Sherpa, right? A Sherpa being a guide and a younger man and an older man can have a relationship where... Well, it could be the younger man guy, the older man, depending on the spiritual maturity. Right? But anyway, generally speaking, it's the older guy guiding the younger man, but he needs a map.

Even the Sherpa needs a map, but today, you don't need a map because you have Google Maps, right? I was on Google this morning, and according to Google, they have 1 billion users a month. Now, I think what they mean is that they have 1 billion uses a month, right? Because everybody double-counts based on the number of uses, not the actual number of people. At least I think that's what's going on. But anyway, let's just say a billion Google Map uses a month, and it's a powerful, powerful tool as Google Maps. The Bible is like Google Maps for the soul.

So yes, you need a Paul, but then you also need a roadmap, and the Bible is that map. So it is the thing that we can use to guide us to our destination. Answer these questions. To satisfy these core affections of the heart, all of these deep issues, and we haven't even talked about suffering, for example, and the questions raised by suffering. But the Bible is the Google Map for the soul.

PAUL'S PROCESS

All right, with that said then, we're talking about the process. I want to talk about the process of making disciples as revealed in this text, and so we're now going to look at Paul's process.

He's using the Bible. In this particular text, he's using the Bible. This is a fantastic little text, by the way. In these four verses... I was going to title it... I started out with the title, Everything You Need to Know in Four Verses, but I thought that was a little preposterous. But it is kind of everything you need to know, at least the broad contours of everything you need to know about making disciples in four verses. So we

already looked at the beginning of the text. Now, let's look at Paul's process, and I'm going to begin by giving you the Big Idea, and then we'll break this down.

This is the **Big Idea. The process of making disciples: Call men to live in Christ. Equip men to live like Christ. Send men to live for Christ.** So in this text, we're going to see a process of calling men to salvation by using the scriptures, calling men using the scriptures that make men wise for salvation. Calling men to live in Christ, and then equip the men with scripture to live like Christ, and then sending men to do work for Christ. So it's a long one. I realize that you might want to snap a picture of it while we still have video, right?

The process of making disciples. Call men to Christ to live in Christ. Equip men to live like Christ, and then send men to live for Christ. We wrote a book on this called No Man Left Behind. Our No Man Left Behind model is built around this. I wrote this book, Pastoring Men. I've got a little chart in Pastoring Men where I take... The Bible is just chocked full of this call, equip, send paradigm, and so I've got many other verses that spell this same process out. Matthew 18, 28, 18. Matthew 8... Well, anyway, the Great Commission at the end of Matthew spells this out as well, but no more clearly than in this passage, anywhere in the Bible, this process of making disciples.

So let's take a look. First, call to live in Christ. So Paul says the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. So we see the preeminence of the scriptures, the centrality of the scriptures, the supremacy of the scriptures. They are able. The Bible is able to make you wise. Hey, watch this. Watch this. The least wise believer in the whole world, and you probably know who that is in your life. Yeah. Somebody who's a believer, but they can't make a good decision to save their lives. The least wise believer in the whole world is infinitely more wise than the wisest nonbeliever.

Why? Because of what's at stake. Are you wise? You're Elon Musk or you're Jeff Bezos or whoever for 80 years. But then what happens for the next 46 billion years? Did you know that... I thought I saw something earlier in the week, but this morning, as I was looking, I couldn't re-find it. But what I found this morning is that the observable universe is estimated to be 46.5 billion light years wide, 46.5 billion light years wide. Whatever that means. Right? Well, what that really means is that the Milky Way is like a speck of dust in the universe, and our solar system is like a speck of dust on a speck of dust.

Our planet earth is like a speck of dust on a speck of dust on a speck of dust, and you, well, you're not even hardly here. You're not even a speck of dust, right? So if you're not wise for salvation, then you are the least wise person. You're less wise than the least wise believer in the whole world. The Holy Scriptures, they're able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, so called to live in Christ. What does that mean? Called to live in Christ, Paul uses this term in Christ over and over and over again. There's a famous theologian named Ridderbos who wrote a whole book mostly about this.

I've read it. It's quite interesting. Actually, it's quite hard to read, but it is interesting. To be in Christ is to have salvation. So Paul is telling Timothy to abide in the things you've learned, that you've known through scripture, these things that are able to make you wise for salvation. So being called to live in Christ is the call to salvation, to eternal life. So that's the first element in the process of making disciples. It's to be called to live in Christ, and then the second one is to be equipped to live like Christ. Siri caught something I said and wanted to talk to me. Continuing in the text, Paul writes, "All scripture is God breathed."

When you read scripture, God inspired human authors with his very thoughts and gave these human authors, the agency, to put those thoughts into human words. Think about it. Think about all the different languages in the world today. So the tendency to demand that every single word be interpreted in a particular way or rendered in a particular way doesn't make any sense because different words have different meanings of different languages, and even the four gospel writers, if you think

about it, you read the four gospels and you will read the same account, and there will be little nuances of difference.

That accounts for the human agency and the thing, but the thought, God's thoughts, there is no distinction from one writer to another in what the thought that God was trying to get across is. So all scripture is God breathed, and when we start talking about the relevancy of the Bible like we were before, one of the issues, of course, is this human agency, and some people think that that reduces the credibility of the Bible, and therefore, it's relevance, but nothing could be further from the truth. When you look at the Bible... I'm finishing... I'm halfway through my 35th year reading the Bible, and I am more amazed today than ever by the continuity of the scriptures and just how everything fits together, how everything makes sense, everything compliments everything.

There are things that are mysterious. "Yeah. Wow." On every page, but 95% of it's crystal clear. So I'm not going to let the 5% I can't figure out poison or spoil the 95% of that's absolutely crystal clear. All scripture's God breathed, and it's useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, training of righteousness. I'm not going to go into the differences of that. Maybe another time. So that the servant of God may be thoroughly what? Equipped. So called to live in Christ is salvation, and then equipped to live like Christ. This is the spiritual growth part of it, the spiritual transformation.

So in the process of discipleship, we have call men to faith in Jesus, and then we equip them to live like Jesus, and then there are many verses on this. Another time, we'll take a deeper dive into that, but I want to give you the arc of the process here today. So then the third piece of this is sent to live for Christ, and so the verse was so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work, for every good work, and if we were to pull in the other texts. Jesus said, "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit showing yourselves to be my what? Disciples. It's the process of making disciples."

Then the idea of Jesus said, "As the father has loved me, so have I loved you. Love one another. All men will know you are my disciples if you love one another." So we are sent to do every good work. We're also sent to do love. We're sent to basically abide in Jesus, love other people, and do good works, and that is the process of making disciples. The process of making disciples, call men. You want to be a spiritual father? Call men to live in Christ. You want to be a spiritual father? Equip men to live like Christ. You want to be a spiritual father? Send men to live for Christ.

You want to be a spiritual son? Allow yourself to be called to live in Christ. You want to be a spiritual son? Allow yourself to be equipped to live like Christ. You want to be a spiritual son? Allow yourself, engage yourself to be sent to live for Christ. That's the deal. That's the process of making disciples. I like this because it gives you a good taxonomy. It gives you good categories. You can work with this. So when you're dealing with a man or you're trying to figure out what your next step is, I like this because it's just a good outline. It's just a good master plan. This is the map. This is the Google Map of making disciples.

HOW YOU CAN HELP A MAN BECOME A DISCIPLE

Then finally, how you can help a man become a disciple. So when we look at the arc of what Paul has been teaching Timothy in this particular book, what we see is a man who has been through good times. He's been through bad times. He himself had the core affections of his heart radically transformed. He started out as someone who hated the king of kings, and then he was transformed and then spent the rest of his life helping people understand the process that he had gone through and go through it themselves, and in particular, he identified Timothy as someone that was well worth making an extra special investment in it, and he did.

So how you can help a man become a disciple is you can just think about, "Okay, am I Paul? Am I a Timothy? Could I be a Paul? Should I be a Timothy?" Then ask yourself, "Okay, well, where am I in this process of making disciples? Am I the person who needs to be called, needs to be equipped, needs to be

sent? Or am I the person who could help another man be called, another man be equipped, another man be sent? Then what do I do to do that?: There's a lot of dysfunctional discipleship. That'd be an interesting turn to play with. Wouldn't it? Dysfunctional discipleship. There's a lot of it going on.

What makes discipleship dysfunctional is the same thing that would make a family dysfunctional. You'd have permissive parents. You'd have passive parents. You've had neglectful parents. You have those kinds, right? Then you have the hovering parent, the one, "Oh, my little disciple can't do anything wrong." Kind of a thing, and, "We're going to give a participation trophy for showing up. We're not going to ask anything of him. We're going to enlist him. We're going to issue him a rifle, but we're not going to teach him how to clean and shoot, and then we're going to be surprised when on the day of battle, he doesn't know how fight." Or you could be an angry parent, or a domineering parent, a demanding parent, a performance-oriented parent.

So you could do discipleship dysfunctionally. You can do this process dysfunctionally. So one thing to do in how to help a man become a disciple is just to think about, "Okay, am I functionally making disciples? Am I functional here? Or am I dysfunctional the way I'm approaching this?" Then make the adjustment that would be necessary for that, and then if you really want to get engaged, I think the thing is is that... I've told you, I've been asking this question for a little over a year now. What is holding men back from taking action? What is holding men taking back from action?

You think about... People say, "I'm overweight. I need to lose weight, or I don't exercise enough, and I need to exercise." They know they need to do it, but they don't do it. What's holding the back from taking action and... Or they take a little action for a little while, and then they stop. So what is that? What's going on? There is an act of the will. There's a decision that we make in the will that stands apart from our circumstances that we say, "Okay, I am a man under the authority of God, and I understand that God's will is for me to be involved in making disciples. So yeah, I'm uncomfortable. I'm going to just live with that discomfort, or yeah, but I don't know how."

"Okay, well, I'm going to get some training on how to do that." We're going to be offering some training here in the near future on how to be a spiritual father, or there's a thing called behavioral activation. I want to wrap this up. So I'm going to tell you about this thing called behavioral activation. If you want to help a man become a disciple, but for whatever reason, you're not doing it, in psychology, they have this thing called behavioral activation, and you have this thing that you should do, maybe it's... You really should be exercising three times a week or whatever it is, but you just can't seem to get started.

Behavioral activation says this. Instead of trying to exercise three times a week, if that's what you think you're supposed to do, instead of trying to exercise three times a week, one morning, get up and take a walk down to the end of the block and back and activate the process of exercise. Just activate, and then a little later, maybe go a hundred yards further and then even maybe in a couple weeks, maybe you could walk around the block, and then maybe instead of doing it once a week, then maybe you can do it two or three times a week, but it's called behavioral activation. I would encourage you. I would encourage you. You have Google Maps for all the young men in the world. You have Google maps right there.

You're the smartest man in the world, brother. You are. You're the smartest person in the world, and you are also wiser than the least wise person who doesn't know how to use this map. That's you. I mean, what else do I have to say? What else does God have to say for us to take action? I don't think you have to say anything else. I think that the Holy Spirit, the final thing that's going to help you help another man become disciple is that when the Holy Spirit in you is strong enough to overcome the resistance of the world to flesh and the devil. That's when it's going to happen. I pray for all of us that we will be spiritual fathers. There's desperate need for this next generation to be able to have this Google Maps for the soul.

Again, the Big Idea, the process for doing that is called making disciples. It's calling men to live in Christ, equipping men to live like Christ, and then sending men to live for Christ, and that is the word of God.

Let's pray. Jesus, thank you so much. Father and Holy Spirit, thank you so much for these four wonderful verses that outlined this process of making disciples. Lord, I pray that you would help each of us to take to heart what behavioral activation we might want to participate in. Lord, most of the men in this room and online who are here in this are actually already doing this work.

So, Lord, would you affirm them in what they're doing? Would you bless them, and thank you to them on behalf of you, God, for their faithfulness to disciple men, and for those of us who need to have that little boost to take action, I pray that you would tutor these words, not my words, but the Word of God, these four verses to each of our hearts so that we might be inspired by the Holy Spirit to make disciples. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen.