



EXPLORE THE BIBLE®

1, 2 Peter, Jude Sermon Series

Supports Session 11: Be Equipped

Sermon Title: “Commands for the Called” (1 Timothy 4:11-16)

Connection to Session 11

We learned from Peter that God fully equips believers for spiritual growth. We learn from Paul that God commands the called to live according to specific commands so that we can better influence those around us.

Introduction/Opening

If someone is 5’9” tall and weights 150 pounds, that person may not be cut out for an NFL offensive lineman. If someone struggles with math, that person need not apply for the opening at the accounting firm. If someone feels too old or too young and has a few mistakes in their past, yet they know Jesus as their Lord and Savior, this person is still called and equipped to represent Jesus wherever they go. We will learn from today’s sermon that Paul gave Timothy specific commands to follow because he was called and equipped to be a witness. Neither Timothy’s age nor his personal background stopped him, and it shouldn’t stop us either.

Outline

1. The called are to teach God’s Word (v. 11)

- a. Paul began this section of Scripture by commanding his protégé in the faith to command and teach these things. The first question we must ask ourselves is, what things? If we answer this question within the specific context of this passage, we understand that these things are the truths outlined in verses 6-10. In these verses Paul articulated that Jesus is “the living God, who is the Savior” (v. 10). Paul also stated in 2 Timothy 3:16, “All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness.” Paul did not merely suggest that Timothy was to talk about these things. He clearly commanded that Timothy was to teach these things.
- b. As a follower of Jesus, we are equipped to serve Him, and we, too, are called to teach God’s Word. This does not mean that we must understand the Greek and Hebrew, but it does mean that we are to teach His Word as opposed to our opinions. This does not mean that we must know every answer to every possible question before we start to share the truths of Scripture. But it does mean that we are going to trust the truths of God’s Word more than we trust our personal feelings. The command to teach God’s Word applied to Timothy. It applies to pastors and Sunday school teachers. It applies to stay-at-home moms, and it applies to corporate executives in the corner office.

2. The called are to set an example (vv. 12-13)

- a. Most of us learn best by following an example. When we learned how to write, we followed someone else’s example. When we learned how to operate our new

phone, we asked our grandchildren to provide an example. In a similar manner, those who are followers of Jesus are to set an example for other believers to follow.

- b. It is important to note that Paul called Timothy to set an example with his total being. His example was to be in his words, his actions, his compassion, and his faith. Paul knew that failure in one of these areas could be catastrophic for Timothy's witness. Therefore, Paul was calling Timothy to a life of holiness.
- c. This call also applies to us today. We cannot behave one way on Sunday and another way at school on Monday. We cannot be an effective leader in the church while stepping on others to obtain a promotion at work. We cannot actively embrace hypocrisy and expect to fulfill this command outlined in Scripture. We all know that we are not perfect and will fail. This does not change the fact that we are called to set an example for others. When we do fail, we need to repent and trust in God to restore us with His grace.

3. The called are to use their gifts (vv. 14-15)

- a. Who has the most fun at Christmas, the kids or the parents and grandparents? If we are parents or grandparents, we know that we have the most fun. The joy we feel and experience when a young child opens a gift and jumps in our laps expressing gratitude is immense. After a big hug and a heartfelt "thank you," the child is off to use the gift as intended. Gifts are meant to be used. It would break our hearts if we gave a loved one a gift that was never used.
- b. Those who know Jesus personally have been given spiritual gift(s), and we are not to neglect them. The word "neglect" refers to actively setting something aside. Instead of neglecting our gifts, we are called to use the gifts that are given to us. When we do this, Scripture says that our growth in Christ will be evident to those around us.

4. The called are to personally reflect (v. 16)

- a. What happens if we do not regularly reflect upon what we do or do not eat? We could end up reflecting upon a new diet from our doctor. What happens if we do not reflect upon our history notes before the test? We could end up reflecting on some additional work in the hopes of making a passing grade. What happens if we do not reflect upon our own spiritual habits as we strive to follow Jesus? Let's hope that we do not discover this answer.
- b. Instead of not reflecting upon our spiritual health and well-being, let us pay close attention to our lives and teachings. Let us be found faithful to persevere no matter how difficult it may be for us. Reflecting upon our spiritual lives may not be easy, but it is necessary. When we obey this call, we are more apt to discover things that are amiss in our lives and make the needed adjustments. If, however, we opt to not live in obedience to this calling, we may find ourselves in circumstances and situations that we do not desire. When this happens, we are much more prone to experience consequences we do not desire.

Conclusion

Each of us has a choice in what we can do with what we have learned from this passage. If you know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, then our calling is clear. We are equipped and called to represent Him in all that we say and do. If, however, you do not know Jesus, you

can reflect upon the fact that He wants to use you in amazing ways and this all begins with a personal relationship with Him in which you submit to Him as Lord and Savior.

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