



Wisdom Worksheet: In Christ to Instruct: 3 Marks of Multiplication (2 Timothy 2)

Introduction

How do you plan to equip and release future generations with the gospel of Christ? Rarely is this question addressed because we remove ourselves from the responsibility for at least four reasons captured in the following statements: “I’m not worthy;” “I’ll create conflict;” “I don’t have time;” or “I don’t know enough.” First, we feel *insignificant*, deeming ourselves as unworthy to communicate anything about God. Second, we pray to God with *discontentment* that our efforts will create conflict and further discontentment. Third, we choose to control our time and the lives of others in the form of achieving our intended outcomes, resulting in our lives being *out of control*. Although we are unable to micromanage our intended results, we still often try to do so. Fourth, we are often *insecure*, fearing that we simply do not know enough about God or the Bible to even think about first steps toward equipping and releasing one person from the next generation with the gospel message of Christ. As a result of these four barriers, we do not choose, think about, pray for, or really want the advancement of the kingdom of God in younger people; thus, breaking apart our relationship with God from our relationships with others. Still the question lingers, “How will we equip and release future generations with the gospel message of Christ?”

God’s answer to this question comes through the Apostle Paul and lies in the cross, a symbol of the vertical intersecting with the horizontal. In his last will and testament, Paul communicated his timeless evangelical message to his disciple Timothy,



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the pastor of the church at Ephesus. He said that we are called to be *in Christ to instruct* (2 Timothy 2). First, we must vertically surrender our lives to Christ as Savior, Lord, and Teacher. Second, we need to horizontally instruct others with His wisdom. Paul offered three habits that empower us to equip and release future generations with the gospel of Christ to live in the sweet spot of the cross where the vertical intersects with the horizontal.

(1) Learn to Teach (2 Timothy 2:1-13)

First, when we are in Christ to instruct, we *learn to teach*. Learning is the vertical component of the cross; teaching is the horizontal. In order to learn, we must engage in the grace of Christ. Paul wrote, “You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 2:1). There is no other place or person where we can receive the grace of God. When we fully surrender our hearts, desires, and lives to Him, He becomes our Teacher; and His instruction includes a purpose. We learn in order to teach others. Paul continued, “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Timothy 2:2). We are to entrust the wisdom of Christ to others who will also be in Christ to instruct. As ministers, we were designed to learn to teach.

This will not come without opposition and challenges, so we must *endure* and *empower*. Paul warned, “Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 2:3). *Endure* means “to be tenacious,” like a warrior who battles for the advancement of Christ in the lives of others (2 Timothy 2:3-7). We are empowered with



the resurrection of Christ and His unchained word so that we may empower others (2 Timothy 2:8-13).

Pause and Let Wisdom Work

First, ask yourself, “*Who is my teacher?*” Is Christ instructing you through a parent, grandparent, an older sibling, a coach, a professor, a friend, a life group leader, or a pastor? Do you even have a teacher? If not, pray to God and seek guidance. Survey your relationships for someone who could help teach you about the heart and life of Christ. If you have not already done so, surrender your heart, desires, and life to Christ. Second, ask, “*Who is my student?*” Are you intentionally teaching anyone about Christ? If so, pray about how to best help him or her to grow in wisdom. Seek the Bible’s passages that are most suitable for the needs of your disciple. If you don’t have a student, then pray to God and ask for one. Make your muscles move with your prayers by examining your relationships for someone who could benefit from your investment. As you study your personal contacts, pray behind their backs in order to discover God’s prompting.

(2) Word into Words (2 Timothy 2:14-21)

Next, when we are in Christ to instruct, we get the *Word into our words*. The Word represents the vertical, our words the horizontal. We are to keep reminding others of what we glean from the Word, warning them before God against quarreling words that have no value and actually ruin those who listen (2 Timothy 2:14). We are to present ourselves as approved to God, correctly handling the Word (2 Timothy 2:15). This helps



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us avoid godless chatter in our words, empty talk that left unchecked perpetuates a progressive ungodliness (2 Timothy 2:16-18). Instead, we confess Christ who cleanses us to be used for God's purposes (2 Timothy 2:19-21).

The Apostles of Jesus, who were used for God's purposes, communicated that we are equipped to instruct others when God's Word gets into our words. Peter taught that God's Word is true (2 Peter 1:19-21). Paul stressed that all Scripture is inspired by our Creator and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that all who are in Christ may be thoroughly equipped for every good work, including the instructing of future generations (2 Timothy 3:16). The writer of Hebrews noted that God's Word is living and active, able to sharply penetrate the heart, judging its thoughts and attitudes (Hebrews 4:12). When God's Word gets into our words, we are equipped to instruct others.

Pause and Let Wisdom Work

First, get into the Word. Delve into a book in the Bible that you could apply to the needs in your life. If you need wisdom, pursue Proverbs or James; if joy, read Philippians; if freedom from the penalty of power of sin, dive into 1 John, Galatians, Ephesians, Hebrews, or Romans; if motivation to reach others, seek inspiration from 1 or 2 Peter; if a better understanding of the heart and life of Christ, comb the Gospels or Colossians; if working through challenges in ministry, study 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, or 1 and 2 Corinthians. While these books of the New Testament cannot be limited to their aforementioned topics, the point is that you can gain restoration and guidance from the



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Scriptures. Second, memorize a verse to assimilate the Word into your words. Speak them humbly and wisely. The more you get into the Word, the more it will get into your words, replacing godless chatter and making you useful for God's purposes.

(3) Heart to Heart (2 Timothy 2:22-26)

Finally, when we are in Christ to instruct, we connect *heart to heart*. We engage with God's heart to reach the hearts of others. God's heart is the vertical component of the cross; the hearts of others represent the horizontal component.

The heart, the core of one's inner being, is comprised of four chambers: the will, intellect, spirit, and emotions. The will is the chamber of our choices. The intellect is the mind, or the chamber of our thoughts. The spirit is the lead chamber of our prayers. The emotions represent the chamber of our feelings. These chambers beat with our four primary desires: *significance* from being created in God's image (Genesis 1:27); *contentment* from being blessed by God to be fruitful, to multiply, and to subdue the earth (Genesis 1:28); *control* from being empowered by God to rule the earth (Genesis 1:28); and *security* from being given every seed-bearing plant and every fruit-bearing tree (Genesis 1:29-30).

In order to be in Christ to instruct, we must fully surrender our hearts and our desires to Him. Paul described this pure heart condition, the object of our search, and the resulting satisfaction of full surrender to Christ when he said, "Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the LORD out of a pure heart" (2 Timothy 2:22). When we flee our evil desires of proudly



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searching for satisfaction apart from Christ, we humbly turn with a pure heart to our Savior, Lord, and Teacher in whom we find satisfaction of our desires. *Righteousness* is what is right in God's sight, which is *truth* that satisfies our desire for *security*. *Faith* is trusting in God rather than ourselves for *control*, and that brings *power*. *Love* is self-sacrificial serving where we discover our ultimate *significance*. *Peace* is absence of strife in our relationships, satisfying our desire for *contentment*. When we are in Christ, He endows us with His heart.

After we receive the satisfying heart of Christ and grow in Him, we connect with the hearts of others by avoiding stupid arguments that produce quarrels (2 Timothy 2:23). We are designed to be kind, able to teach, and not resentful (2 Timothy 2:24). Finally, we are called to gently instruct people who oppose Christ in the hope that God will grant them repentance, leading to a knowledge of truth (2 Timothy 2:25). Instructing with the gentle heart of Christ provides an environment for those who oppose Him to come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will (2 Timothy 2:26). They too can be in Christ to instruct future generations if they fully surrender to Him as Lord, Savior, and Teacher.

Pause and Let Wisdom Work

First, flee the evil desires of your youth and pursue the righteousness, faith, love, and peace of Christ. Ask the Holy Spirit to identify anything in your heart that represents a desire for life apart from Him. After it is revealed, confess the sin and receive restoration to reflect the pure heart of Christ. Second, pursue the heart of another. Engage



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the will, intellect, spirit, and emotions as well as the desires of your disciple. Do it without foolish and stupid arguments that produce quarrels. Be kind, able to teach, and not resentful. Finally, gently instruct people who oppose Christ in the hope that God will grant them repentance, leading to a knowledge of truth. Perhaps, they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

Conclusion

In order to equip and release future generations with the gospel of Christ, we are called to be *in Christ to instruct*. First, we must vertically surrender our lives to Christ as Savior and Lord, embracing Him as our Teacher. Second, we need to horizontally instruct others with His wisdom. We reveal the cross when we learn to teach, get the Word into our words, and connect God's heart with the hearts of others.