**Be Like Timothy!**

When Paul returned to Lystra in Asia Minor on his second missionary journey, he met a young disciple of Jesus named Timothy. There is no mention of Timothy in Luke’s account of Paul’s first visit to Lystra, so he must have been converted after Paul’s first journey. Timothy’s mother was Jewish and his father was Greek which made him a bit of an anomaly. His mother and grandmother had taught him the Jewish Scriptures, but he had never been circumcised.

Paul was so impressed with the young man, he encouraged him to accompany him on his preaching trip and Timothy agreed. That was the beginning of a wonderful life-long relationship and Timothy soon became the son that Paul never had. Our best understanding of the character of this impressive young man comes from Luke’s account of their travels and Paul’s references to Timothy in his letters to churches.

Paul once told us, “Join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us” (Philippians 3:17). The life and character of Timothy comes so highly commended by Paul himself that we would be foolish not to imitate his admirable attributes.

**Knowledge.** Timothy’s Greek father married into a faithful Jewish family and his wife and mother-in-law were serious about teaching young Timothy the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:14-15). But learning is a lifelong process. Paul admonished the young man to “be diligent (study) to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

**Sincere faith.** Timothy’s mother and grandmother had sincere faith and passed that faith along to him (2 Timothy 1:5). When Timothy and his mother heard the good news about the coming of Christ, that sincere faith continued into their relationship with Jesus.

**Trustworthiness.** Timothy was a fellow worker of Paul in whom he had the greatest confidence. When Paul needed someone to send to a local church that needed encouragement, he felt perfectly comfortable sending Timothy. There were Corinth (1 Corinthians 4:16-17), Philippi (Philippians 2:19-22) and Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 3:1-7). Paul could trust Timothy to strengthen them and encourage them and to remind them of what is important.

**Genuine love for the brethren.** Paul held himself to a high standard and some who worked with him struggled to measure up. But of Timothy he said, “I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. For they all seek after their own interest, not those of Christ” (Philippians 2:20-21).

As Christians, we must continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). As we strive to further our development, it is helpful to mimic those who are doing well. If you are looking for a role model, the knowledge, faith, trustworthiness and love of Timothy is a good place to start.

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