

MAXIMISE YOUR POTENTIAL – Sunday 7th May 2017

8: THE POTENTIAL OF BEING AN EXAMPLE

2 Timothy 3.1-17

Throughout 2 Timothy, Paul who is about to be executed, is handing on the baton of ministry to his younger disciple Timothy who he has mentored over a number of years.

There is a challenge in life about the kind of legacy we leave behind.

How are we to invest our lives in order to be an example to others around us?

In **Eph 5.1** there is the call to *be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us...*

We will look at the whole of chapter 3 and the impacting power of a good example.

[Within your small group you may only want to cover part of the chapter.]

1. BE AN EXAMPLE IN AN UNGODLY WORLD v.1-9

In preparation for your small group – take a newspaper or online paper and view it in the light of what Paul says in these verses.

- Try to come with some illustration of scripture being up to date.

Paul refers to the **Last Days**, which is the period of time that we are in now and have been since Jesus died on the cross. Heb 1.1-2 *in these last days he has spoken...*

At Pentecost, the promise of Joel is that God would pour out his Spirit in the last days.

There is an indication of how there will be seasons or periods of time when significant instability is experienced in an ungodly world where evil manifests itself readily.

Alan referred to:

Godless conduct in v.1-4.

There is a long list of 19 characteristics of godless conduct. Note the breakdown of family life, social life and discipline.

- What really stands out for you in this listing?

These characteristics arise because of the first and last – *people being lovers of themselves and being lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.*

Godless religion in v.5

This is the bogus religion promoted by the false teachers. Outwardly it looks great but it is just a religious veneer of bankrupt religion... Amos 5.21-23; Isaiah 1.14-17

John Stott sums it up as:

Form without power

outward show without inward reality

religion without morals

faith without works

- How do you understand the statement *have nothing to do with them?*

- What do we learn from the life of Jesus about dealing with such people?

Godless persuasion – v.6-9 False teachers particularly have extensive influence...people can be captivated by their charm.

Paul in Acts speaks to the leaders of Ephesus(where Timothy pastored) regarding the challenges to be faced in **Acts 20. 28-29**.

2. AN EXAMPLE ENCOURAGED BY A MENTOR v.10-13

Paul speaks of his own sphere of influence and the example that he is. He seeks to mentor Timothy.

Remember –

- his teaching
- his conduct
- his aim in life
- his virtues
- his persecutions and rescues

Share together how you would see the encouragement of a mentor.

Is it something that you have ever considered or experienced?

3. AN EXAMPLE STRENGTHENED BY THE SCRIPTURES v.13-17

Look back on your own life and give thanks for those who have spiritually influenced you. For Timothy, it was his mother and grandmother followed by Paul himself.

How do you find that you are strengthened by the scriptures?

Think through the areas where the scriptures impact us as mentioned by Paul in v.16.

Take time to share what helps you find useful? What are some of the difficulties that you have encountered in having a daily time when you read the scriptures?

v.17 in the Message ‘ Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us.’

FOR YOUR OWN NOTES: