

**Introduction: The deceptive power of “other things”**

How can a person remain true to their calling, their Lord, and His Word in a hostile, anti-Christian culture while dealing with our own personal inadequacies and problems?

**The answer = Paul's “action plan” for Timothy and us – To be strong in difficult times**

1. Make abiding in Christ your #1 priority every day 2 Timothy 2:1
  - The command = “Be strong in grace” Ephesians 6:10  
John 15:5
  - The application = “Watch over your heart with all diligence...” Proverbs 4:23  
Romans 12:2
  
2. Make personally investing in F.A.T. people your #2 priority 2 Timothy 2:2  
(F = Faithful, A = Available, T = Teachable)
  - The command = spiritual reproduction

3. Develop a “never give up” attitude by actively meditating on three specific metaphors. 2 Timothy 2:3-7
- The singular \_\_\_\_\_ of a *soldier* to combat distractions. 2 Timothy 2:3-4
  - The continual \_\_\_\_\_ of a victorious *athlete* to combat dissipation. 2 Timothy 2:5
  - The patient \_\_\_\_\_ of a *farmer* to combat discouragement. 2 Timothy 2:6
  - Application = where do you struggle? How does v. 1-2 apply to these practices?

### **Remember, remember, remember, who and what really matters**

- Remember Jesus, the Person 2 Timothy 2:8
- Remember the power of God's Word 2 Timothy 2:9
- Remember those who taught and helped you 2 Timothy 2:10a
- Remember the eternal implications 2 Timothy 2:10b
- Remember to keep preaching the Gospel to yourself 2 Timothy 2:11-13

**Make diligent study and accurate communication of God's Word your #3 priority**

- Dig deep and humbly teach the truth boldly 2 Timothy 2:15, 18, 24
  
- Refuse to get “sucked into” pointless debates 2 Timothy 2:14, 16, 19
  
- If making a difference is your priority, then take your personal growth in godliness seriously 2 Timothy 2:20-23
  - The prerequisite = “cleanses himself/herself, made holy”
  - The motive = “usefulness to the Master”
  - The practice = “flee... pursue... with those...”
  - The practice = “refuse foolish and ignorant speculation...”
  
- “The Lord's bondservant must not be quarrelsome, but kind.” 2 Timothy 2:24-26

**Summary**

Real discipleship is a marathon race, it is filled with obstacles, distractions, temptations, and hardships occurring in a spiritual, invisible battle for your soul and those you love! It requires God's strength, infusions of His Word, power from His Spirit, an eternal perspective, and comrades in arms who will join you in a long obedience in the same direction – and it is so worth it!

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What of Paul's "action plan" most resonated with you and why?
2. Which of the 3 metaphors do you need to meditate and apply to your life? Are you most prone to be distracted, undisciplined, or impatient?
3. The Bible is powerful, timeless, eternal, and anchors our faith. It keeps us grounded, and sustains us through the hardships, injustices, and challenges we all face. What would it look like for you to "go deeper" in God's Word? (2 Timothy 2:15) How does your mental diet need to change to bring the peace and perspective God wants for your life?
4. How have you responded to people who oppose your faith and values? Read verse 23-26. What do you need to change about your reaction to those you disagree with? How can you better love them?