

Discipleship is in Relationships (2)

1 Thessalonians 2:14 to 3:13



1 Thessalonians 2

¹⁴ And then, dear brothers and sisters, **you suffered persecution** from your own countrymen. In this way, **you imitated the believers in God's churches** in Judea who, because of **their belief in Christ Jesus**, suffered from their own people, the Jews. ¹⁵ For some of the Jews killed the prophets, and some even killed the Lord Jesus. Now they have persecuted us, too. They fail to please God and work against all humanity ¹⁶ as **they try to keep us from preaching the Good News of salvation** to the Gentiles. By doing this, they continue to pile up their sins. But the anger of God has caught up with them at last.

1 Thessalonians 2

¹⁷ Dear brothers and sisters, after we were separated from you for a little while (though our hearts never left you), we tried very hard to come back because of our intense longing to see you again. ¹⁸ **We wanted very much to come to you**, and I, Paul, tried again and again, but **Satan prevented us**. ¹⁹ After all, what gives us hope and joy, and **what will be our proud reward and crown as we stand before our Lord Jesus when he returns?** It is **you!** ²⁰ Yes, you are our pride and joy.

1 Thessalonians 3

¹ Finally, when we could stand it no longer, we decided to stay alone in Athens, ² and **we sent Timothy** to visit you. He is our brother and **God's co-worker in proclaiming the Good News of Christ**. We sent him **to strengthen you, to encourage you in your faith,** ³ and **to keep you from being shaken by the troubles** you were going through. But you know that we are destined for such troubles.

1 Thessalonians 3

⁴ Even **while we were with you**, we **warned** you that troubles would soon come—and they did, as you well know. ⁵ That is why, when I could bear it no longer, I sent Timothy to **find out whether your faith was still strong**. I was afraid that the **tempter** had gotten the best of you and that our work had been useless.

1 Thessalonians 3

⁶ But now **Timothy has just returned, bringing us good news about your faith and love**. He reports that you always remember our visit with joy and that you want to see us as much as we want to see you. ⁷ So we have been **greatly encouraged in the midst of our troubles and suffering**, dear brothers and sisters, because **you have remained strong in your faith**.

1 Thessalonians 3

⁸ It gives us new life to know that you are standing firm in the Lord.

⁹ How we thank God for you! Because of you we have great joy as we enter God's presence. ¹⁰ Night and day we pray earnestly for you, **asking God to let us see you again to fill the gaps in your faith.**

¹¹ May God our Father and our Lord Jesus bring us to you very soon.

1 Thessalonians 3

¹² And may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow, just as our love for you overflows. ¹³ May he, as a result, make your hearts strong, blameless, and holy as you stand before God our Father when our Lord Jesus comes again with all his holy people.

Amen.

Spiritual Maturity

If Discipleship is in Relationships then what is the Method?

^{2:18} We wanted very much to come to you, and I, Paul, tried again and again, but Satan prevented us.

^{3:2b} ...We sent him to strengthen you, to encourage you in your faith,

^{3:10b} ...asking God to let us see you again to fill the gaps in your faith.

Fully Engaged In Person Relationships!

Why is being "in person" so important for discipleship?

^{Jn 1:1} In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

^{Jn 1:14} And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Why is being "in person" so important for discipleship?

^{Rom 1:11} For I long to visit you so I can bring you some spiritual gift that will help you grow strong in the Lord. ¹² When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours.

^{3 Jn 1:13} I have much more to say to you, but I don't want to write it with pen and ink.

¹⁴ For I hope to see you soon, and then we will talk face to face.

Are "in person" spiritual relationships a priority in your life?

- Praying together
- Reading the Bible together
- Discussing biblical truth
- Sharing current struggles & spiritual lessons
- Rejoicing together
- Praising together

³⁴ So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. **Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.**

³⁵ Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples. (Jn 13)

If Discipleship is in Relationships then what is the Goal?

^{2:19} After all, what gives us hope and joy, and **what will be our proud reward and crown as we stand before our Lord Jesus when he returns?**

It is you! ²⁰ Yes, you are our pride and joy.

A Godly concern and activity for the spiritual growth of others!

If Discipleship is in Relationships then what is the Goal?

⁸ It gives us new life to know that you are standing firm in the Lord.

⁹ How we thank God for you! Because of you we have great joy as we enter God's presence.

Godly concern and activity for the spiritual growth of others!

He was emotional about their condition spiritually!

⁵ That is why, when I could bear it no longer, I sent Timothy to find out whether your faith was still strong. I was afraid that the tempter had gotten the best of you and that our work had been useless.

Negative

Paul had a Godly concern and activity for the spiritual growth of others!

He was emotional about their condition spiritually!

⁶ But now Timothy has just returned, bringing us good news about your faith and love. He reports that you always remember our visit with joy and that you want to see us as much as we want to see you.

Positive

Paul had a Godly concern and activity for the spiritual growth of others!

How can we change from:

- self-protection mode
- relational dependence mode



Relational health is found in spiritual health!

And I have been a constant example of how you can help those in need by working hard. You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'
Acts 20:35

