

An Anniversary Encouragement
Sunday, November 29, 2020

1. It's hard to believe that we are entering our fifth year together!
2. Four years ago I made a commitment to you! I reviewed my notes and my message and I repeat it to you today:
 - a) I promised to love you as best I could
 - b) I promised to serve and care for you with The Lord's enabling
 - c) I promised to preach the pure Word of God to you to the best of my understanding and ability
3. That message and notes have been reposted on our web site.
4. We spoke of the wonderful "legacy" of Magnolia and how it has been built upon the message of the cross of Christ and how the scripture says that message has the power or "dunamis" in it!
5. We realized how God has called us as His "ambassadors" to our world around us!

This Has Not Changed!

- I. I want to read from and focus on a book of Scripture called the "Pastoral Epistles." The books of First and Second Timothy.
 - A. These were letters written by Paul to Timothy, who was a "spiritual son" to Paul and an appointed leader in many early churches as Christianity spread!
 1. Timothy had a deep love for the church.

2. He raised up leaders and mentored believers in the life of a church in particular communities.
- B. Timothy ministers in Thessalonica, Corinth, Philippi, Berea, and of course, Ephesus.
1. Timothy was the son of a “mixed marriage.”
 2. He had a Greek father and a Jewish mother.
 3. This is interesting to know because he is able to NOT ALLOW culture to overly influence his ministry!
 4. Generally speaking, Timothy is seen as a manual for church planting and church life!

2 Timothy 2:1-8 (TPT)

Timothy, my dear son, live your life empowered by God’s free-flowing grace, which is your true strength, found in the anointing of Jesus and your union with him! 2 And all that you’ve learned from me, confirmed by the integrity of my life, pass on to faithful leaders who are competent to teach the congregations the same revelation 3 Overcome every form of evil as a victorious soldier of Jesus the Anointed One. 4 For every soldier called to active duty must divorce himself from the distractions of this world so that he may fully satisfy the one who chose him. 5 An athlete who doesn’t play by the rules will never receive the trophy, so remain faithful to God! 6 The farmer who labors to produce a crop should be the first one to be fed from its harvest. 7 Carefully consider all that I’ve taught you, and may our Lord inspire you with wisdom and revelation in everything you say and do 8 But make Jesus, the Anointed One, your focus in life and ministry. For he came to earth as the descendant of David and rose from the dead, according to the revelation of the gospel that God has given me.

II. I want to use these words of Timothy as a guide and literal covenant of Magnolia as we walk into the future together! Remember, the church throughout history has used these words a guide and direction for “church life!”

A. The very first verse in the second chapter sets the tone:

“Timothy, my dear son, live your life empowered by God’s free-flowing grace, which is your true strength, found in the anointing of Jesus and your union with him!”

1. I desire for us all to “live life” and be a blessing to one another by being “empowered by God!”
2. The phrase “spiritual gifts” has either been feared or ignored!
3. In Romans 12, Ephesians 4 and I Corinthians 12 we see example after example of “Spirit enabled gifts” that are giving to us to serve others!
4. I encourage you to read those grace gifts and in all three passages and ask where you fit!
5. What motivates you in your relationship to others? What do you spend most of your time thinking of as it relates to helping others? What do others think you good at?
6. In most cases, all of those questions point to your gifts!

7. My promise to you is to use mine to minister to you: To preach to you, to serve you, to encourage you, to lead you, to teach you, to speak words of wisdom and knowledge to you as the Lord gives them!
8. My question to you is; WHAT do you commit to Magnolia? You need to have an answer to that question!

B. Next, Paul explains to Timothy how the Kingdom of God is established and how it flourishes:

“And all that you’ve learned from me, confirmed by the integrity of my life, pass on to faithful leaders who are competent to teach the congregations the same revelation.”

1. My promise to you is that I will dig deeply into the life of God and His Word and teach as accurately as I can the WAYS OF GOD!

II Timothy 2:15 (TPT)

15 Always be eager to present yourself before God as a perfect and mature minister, without shame, as one who correctly explains the Word of Truth.

2. We must ALL REMEMBER that our Lord told ALL OF US to go and make disciples. To live out the Gospel! To be AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST.
3. So, my question is what are you doing in life to live out this truth? What are you doing in your church family to live out this truth?

4. Are you living in such a way that you are “passing on the truth of God” that you have received? Will you commit to?

C. The next encouragement to Timothy from Paul gets personal:

“Overcome every form of evil as a victorious soldier of Jesus the Anointed One. For every soldier called to active duty must divorce himself from the distractions of this world so that he may fully satisfy the one who chose him.”

1. I have never seen the church FAIL at this like the last few years!
2. I commit to Magnolia to STAY FOCUSED on the life of Jesus and His Gospel!
3. I will endeavor to refuse to become distracted by a message or cultural emphasis beside the life and words of The Lord! Yes, I will make application of those words to our culture, but I will not change the Gospel to a cultural or an American message!
4. Will you make that commitment with me? To focus on The Lord and being more like Him and not on what you believe culturally? Politically? Or even your preference?
5. Will you allow the TABLE OF THE LORD to be the center of your life and our fellowship?

D. Then, Paul explains to Timothy that “the inspiration of the Lord” should be the foundation of all we do!

“Carefully consider all that I’ve taught you, and may our Lord inspire you with wisdom and revelation in everything you say and do.”

1. This is yet another example of how we should conduct our lives in complete dependence on the Lord!
2. Jesus is our example in this!

John 5:19 (TPT)

19 So Jesus said, "I speak to you timeless truth. The Son is not able to do anything from himself or through my own initiative. I only do the works that I see the Father doing, for the Son does the same works as his Father.

3. As your ministry leader, I commit to you to seek the Lord's direction, be very sensitive to His leading and communicate that only after much prayer and submission to the Lord!
4. Remember, the Lord chose the analogy of a BODY when describing His people in the earth!
The Body of Christ!
5. When our physical bodies are not in sync and in balance that is when we are sick or physically unbalanced!

Ephesians 5:21 (NLT)

21 And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

(NLV)

21 Be willing to help and care for each other because of Christ. By doing this, you honor Christ.

6. This is yet again where the "gifts of The Spirit" are experienced in The Church and in a congregation!
- E. The last encouragement for Timothy from Paul was to
NOT LOSE HIS FOCUS!

“But make Jesus, the Anointed One, your focus in life and ministry.”

1. I desire for any influence I have in ministry to flow out from my personal devotion to Christ!
2. I don't want to just “study to preach” but rather “study and pray” to become more like my Lord!! Out of those discoveries share with others “my findings!”

2 Corinthians 3:18 (TPT)

18 We can all draw close to him with the veil removed from our faces. And with no veil we all become like mirrors who brightly reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus. We are being transfigured into his very image as we move from one brighter level of glory to another. And this glorious transfiguration comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

3. Church, let's commit to the Lord and one another to NEVER LOSE OUR FOCUS!
4. May Jesus be our focus when we gather for Sunday worship!!! When we reach out in our benevolence efforts! Even when we are in fellowship together in homes or special gatherings at church!
5. This only happens if it is happening on a personal level.
6. Remember, we only bring with us when we gather what we experience while apart!