

## Application Guide: Lessons from Paul for 2005

**December 26, 2004:** Joe Bartemus, Pastor of College Park Church, continued Pastor Kimber's theme on Spiritual Disciplines in 2005 by examining Paul's first letter to Timothy in which he gave some special instructions to Timothy, in chapter 4. As Pastor Joe began his message he outlined three elements of Paul's encouragement to Timothy that are directly applicable to us as we endeavor to live good spiritual lives in the coming year:

1. Let's get started by getting a handle on the manual of life...the Holy Scriptures that bring us to God and show us the way, the truth and the life.
2. Prepare yourself for successful Christian living...through a disciplined approach of "pre-season" practice and exercise.
3. Finally it's game time...live the Christian life like you've always wanted...to please our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In 1 Timothy 4:1-6, Pastor Joe warned us to BEWARE that some will fall away from the faith...having the form of godliness but not being real (2 Timothy 3:5). He pointed out that our day-to-day lives need to be integrated into a life of worship...living in the presence of God, rather than separated into sacred (Sunday worship) and secular areas (the rest of the week).

In 1 Timothy 4:7-10, Pastor Joe pointed out that if we want to be successful, we need to stay on task and not get sidetracked on irrelevant rabbit trails (v7). We need to focus on becoming more godly, as opposed to worldly, in our pursuits in life because of the impact it has on our life today, as well as in the future (v8). In doing so we need to realize that it won't come easy. It requires labor, hard work and a plan with a goal in mind to keep us focused on why we are doing what we do (v9-10).

As Pastor Joe concluded with 1 Timothy 4:11-16, he pointed out that Paul was encouraging Timothy to get on with his life and focus on those things that will move him toward his goal. As we study this portion of scripture, and look to what we would like to do in 2005, perhaps our plan should include...

A. Being an example of godliness (v12 )...

- a) In what we say...our speech (Ephesians 4:29)
- b) In the way we live our lives...our conduct (Ephesians 4 and 5).
- c) In the way we love one another...for in doing so people will know you are My disciple (John 13:34-35).
- d) In the way we demonstrate our faith...particularly when going through various trials (James 1:2-3).
- e) In the purity of our lives...so we might see God at work (Matthew 5:8).

B. Devoting ourselves to doing those things that will help us be what we desire to be...

- a) Maintaining a daily life of worship...reading of the Scriptures and applying what we've learned (v13).
- b) Using our Spiritual gifts to minister to others (v14).
- c) Diligently and whole-heartedly devote ourselves to making progress (v15).
- d) Keep alert, watch closely what we say and do, and stay with it...persevere (v16).

## **Application Questions:**

- A. Discuss how the three elements, outlined by Pastor Joe, can be applied to becoming a successful musician, doctor or professional football player. How have they applied to your life?
- B. As Paul encouraged Timothy to admonish and encourage people to be constantly nourished in the word (v6)...
  - a) What are the distractions of life that often get in our way of doing so? (What Paul describes as deceiving spirits and things taught by demons)
  - b) How do these distractions tend to draw us away from the faith?
  - c) What would you like to do differently in 2005 to keep your faith alive and well?
- C. What is your goal in life?
- D. What is your plan, in 2005, to help you move closer to achieving your goal?

**Suggestion:** Review the “Yellow card” available at the table in the foyer, and consider reading, discussing and encouraging each to sign the Spiritual Disciplines Covenant, also available at the table.

- E. How can we encourage one another to hang in there and keep up the good work we each would like to do?

## **Resources:**

1. *Life You've Always Wanted...spiritual disciplines for ordinary people*, by John Ortberg and published by Zondervan (2002). Pastor John Ortberg, of Willow Creek Community Church, is also the author of *“If you want to walk on water, you've got to get out of the boat.”*
2. Pastor Joe Bartermus outlined several disciplines that you might consider depending on your situation in life.
  - A. If you are struggling with sins of commission (i.e., lust, anger, coveting) perhaps some disciplines of abstinence would be helpful (i.e., fasting, silence, solitude, memorizing scripture, etc.).
  - B. If you are struggling with sins of omission (i.e., NOT loving, serving, encouraging) perhaps some disciplines of encouragement would be helpful (i.e., study and memorize scripture, fellowship with fellow believers, giving in secret, praying for others, etc.).
3. Check out the resources available at the Spiritual Disciplines table in the foyer of College Park Church.