



**Sermon Series:** Mentoring: Investing in Others

**To be used with Session 6:** Paul and Timothy

**Sermon Title Possibilities:** From Gazing to Blazing

**Scripture:** Acts 16:1-5; 2 Timothy 2:1-2; 3:10-12

**Connection with Unit Theme:** To complement the Bible study “Mentoring: Investing in Others” this sermon teaches us how to focus mentorship on growth in Christ and His Word. We learn through the mentorship exchange of Paul and Timothy where growth comes from, what it produces, and how to properly deal with it. We cannot responsibly address the temptation in our lives until we correctly assess the temptation in our lives.

**Introduction:** The Kentucky Derby, considered by some "the most exciting two minutes in sports," is a one and one-quarter mile race with a maximum of 20 horses vying for a grand prize of over one million dollars. Each year close to 20,000 thoroughbred foals follow a five-month scheduled race point system to qualify for the Kentucky Derby. One of the keys to the race is how focused horses can stay while experiencing the many distractions during the race. Riders depend on blinkers to keep horses focused while riding between 37- 40 miles per hour down a dirt track. Other horses, shouting fans, festive sites, and a host of reasons for horses to veer to the right or left can be detrimental to qualifying times. Blinkers reduce horses’ field of vision, allowing for a concentrated effort and focus on the track ahead. In our text, we see how Paul mentored Timothy and kept his focus on the main thing, Jesus Christ and His sacrifice.

### **1. Building a Foundation (Acts 16:1-5)**

For Paul to minister to Timothy, the establishment of trust is paramount. Paul, evidently pleased with the family background of Timothy (2 Tim. 1-5), desired for him to travel with him to continue the work of ministry. Timothy, born of a Jewish woman, appeared to leave an impression on Paul that led him to consider being a mentor to Timothy. Building a strong foundation is essential for trust and mentorship. Circumcision was the first step to calming Jewish critics, who made it a big issue. Timothy proved his trust level with Paul and allowed circumcision to be performed. With that, the foundation was built for Timothy to be an apprentice to Paul and learn under his tutelage. In verses 4 and 5, Paul and Timothy traveled through towns and strengthened churches as they grew in daily numbers.

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## 2. **Building a Focus (2 Timothy 2:1-2)**

After Paul spent time with Timothy, he moved toward building him up for ministry, which entailed focusing on the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Make no mistake; ministry was difficult, and persecution surrounding this upstart Christian group remained volatile. However, Paul reminded Timothy to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Understanding that strength is not in oneself but in the grace of Jesus Christ. Proverbs 3:5-7 reminds us not “to lean on our own understanding.” In the same way, we must understand that our strength is insufficient to handle the challenges of the day. However, as Paul advised Timothy, we must be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Paul encouraged Peter to follow in his footsteps as he walked in the faith. May we not only follow those who have gone before us but leave a trail for those who come after us.

## 3. **Building a Fighter (Acts 15:36-40)**

After Paul established a foundation with Timothy and locked in his focus on Christ Jesus, the only thing left to do was to build a fighter. Paul gave Timothy a recap of everything he experienced under Paul's care. In these few verses, Paul became a cheerleader, teammate, counselor, and coach. Paul reminded Timothy that he had followed his teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, and endurance (v. 10). This reminder will be significant as Timothy moved forward without Paul's presence. In verse 11, Paul reminded Timothy of the persecution that came to him in certain cities and that as followers of Jesus Christ, persecution will come. Many Christians today are unaware that Christianity is a contact sport and hard hits happen. Because Jesus received persecution, persecution will occur for all who follow Him. May we be the kind of people rooted and grounded in God's word amidst persecution to be a light to the world and an example for generations to come.

**Conclusion:** Paul's mentorship remained simple. Impart the overwhelming awareness of what Jesus Christ did on the cross into a mentee. In doing so, an unmatched allegiance to Jesus will inspire a tenacity to learn about God's unmerited grace. Once unmerited grace is understood, persecution becomes an honor worth enduring because of the sacrifice Jesus suffered on our behalf. Therefore, the Great Commission of going “into all the world” (Matt. 28:19-20) becomes paramount because everyone needs to hear and see the captivating works of Jesus Christ in the lives of His believers. After which, the mentee becomes the mentor, and the cycle of training new believers starts all over again. Once that happens, making disciples who make disciples is never ending, and the world transformation of lives happens because one mentor impacts one mentee.

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