

A Service of Ordination and Installation
“A Pastor Who Made a Difference”
II Timothy 3:14–17
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February 16, 2020 • Evening Sermon

This is a very special time in the life of the Lord’s church in general and certainly for this local church in particular. We will be looking at II Timothy 3. Westby (Anderson) was doing some general internship here at Briarwood to be ordained but his desire was to go back into the military for a chaplain’s ministry. I guess the military is like every other part of the government in that they have so many regulations you have to go through which is what he was facing to go into the chaplaincy. One day he came in to talk with me and I had to get him to slow down so I could track with him all he would have to do. One of the things he shared with me was that an internship under a church was no longer a sufficient regulation but that now he had to have 18 months to two years of actually ordained pastoral ministry and not an internship for pastoral ministry. So there are many he will need to do as a pastor working under another ordained pastor so we began to see how he could do that here at Briarwood. We have a lot invested in Westby and I didn’t want that to get messed up for him. I certainly didn’t want to lose the benefits of watching him develop and being encouraged by it. So several of us got together and figured out how we could bring him in for a year and half to two years on our pastoral staff.

For instance, we have a church ‘behind the wire’ in Bibb County that we minister to and we began to see how the Lord put together quite a profile for Westby here that would give him some extraordinary experience. We believe in God’s providence it would help him be more prepared in that anticipation of the chaplaincy. One of the things that became obvious was how this situation fit right into our mission’s ministry at the church. Westby has become like another Bailey Marks, one of the first missionaries sent out from this church over 50 years ago. I see the same thing in the future for Westby as a chaplain and then whatever the Lord might call him to in and beyond that.

I just anticipate all the lives that will be worked on and changed by the grace of God as Westby ministers the Gospel of saving grace – that you’re saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone and that the works we do don’t save us but they evidence the salvation that God is doing in us as Westby takes that message into a pastoral ministry. It will be astounding the lives that will be impacted. If I hang on long enough I could use Westby as an illustration at a mission’s conference because that’s what he’ll be as he goes to be a chaplain in the Army and it won’t cost a dime from our mission’s committee because the government will take care of his package. All we’ll need to do is pray and stay in touch with him. So for the next couple of years he will be preparing here for what God will have for him working with those in the military.

This study is a part of that and I thought about the text I would use for Westby and for us to understand what happens. Paul is the author of II Timothy and this was the last letter that he wrote. There are 13 epistles written by the Apostle Paul and 9 of them catch our attention because they are directed to local churches, except for the letter to Ephesus which is a general letter to a number of churches. As he writes these letter we see this constant refrain of who we are in Christ and that we’re not saved by our obedience or our works or the sacraments of the church but that we’re saved by grace alone, through faith alone and in Christ alone. Now these sacraments become a glorious gift from God whereby we are signing and sealing the work of the covenant of grace and the preaching of the Word is that which begins to equip us. The works

that we do manifest to the world, not someone that is perfect but someone who is being perfected by the presence of the Holy Spirit with the Word of God. Then He us using us for His glorious grace in which we see all this in Paul's letters to the churches.

Then Paul writes letters to individuals. He writes one to Philemon who housed the church at Colossae in his home. He writes one to Titus and Timothy. These letters are very similar because both men were being led out to a very specific ministry of church revitalization. Titus was going to Crete to set in order what remained and Timothy was going to Ephesus because that church needed revitalization so they get instructions from Paul as to how to do a pastoral work of the ministry of church revitalization.

Paul is in his second Roman imprisonment and doesn't have long to live. The days are drawing near and he writes his last letter to his son in the faith who he had poured his life and heart into. Timothy wasn't the only man Paul disciplined for there was Titus, Silas, Luke and others but there was something personal in Paul's relationship to Timothy. He probably wrote this letter to Timothy at least hours maybe days before he died, with instructions not about a particular ministry of pastoral revitalization but instructions of how to be effective for Christ as a man called of God to be a minister of the Gospel of grace in the church of Christ which He purchased with His own blood.

We call I Timothy, II Timothy and Titus the pastoral epistles but I think II Timothy technically is the real pastoral epistle. I am going to use one section of this epistle, give you three divisions of it and then close with one thought as we come to Westby's ordination.

II Timothy 3:10–13 says *[10] You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, [11] my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. [12] Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, [13] while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.*

Here we see Timothy's past development, from review by Paul as Paul had become a model to imitate and a mentor who instructed him. We all need models for our life. The best thing to do when you get models is wait till they die so you know how they finished but with Paul who is now approaching death he is reminding Timothy of how Timothy has been watching him. Timothy has learned from and followed Paul. He has seen Paul persecuted, suffering and saw him teach. Paul wants Timothy to know that what he really saw was not his perseverance but how the Lord rescued him.

There were two reasons Paul persevered when he was stoned, struck with 39 lashes, imprisoned, was thrown over a wall, and was withheld food and drink. One is that it shouldn't surprise you for if you desire to serve Christ you will be a target of the world and Satan. All who live Godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. Every true believer will at some time in some way in some manner to some degree be called to suffer for Christ and we saw this in our study of I Peter. It may not be their life but their livelihood and it can come in all kinds of ways but that's our calling in this world. I Peter 4:12 says *[12] Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.* When you minister you can expect the challenges of adversity from the world outside and from the world inside as it gets inside the church.

So get ready to give yourself in life and ministry and the people you give the most to abandon you. The way you handle that is to never do it for them to applaud you to begin with. Do it for the Lord. Whether they appreciate it or applaud it or not, that never becomes the issue

for it's the Lord who is displeased or pleased with how you discharge your calling as a pastor/teacher for His people. Remember every ordained officer and pastor is that your perseverance is because of their preservation. They rescued you. God never forsakes us in the middle of trials and He never forsakes us because He went to the cross to be forsaken for us. Therefore He says He will never leave you nor forsake you. When you falter in faithlessness He will always be faithful. As a Gospel minister you will need to call upon that many times.

This is why Spurgeon would tell his pastor's college "Men, if you can go do anything other than the ministry, then go do it. You have to know you're called because when the days of challenge, adversity and disappointment come, if you are in the ministry for any other reason than God calling you, then you will falter in that day." But if you trust Him and keep your eyes on Him, get those models who have gone before you and those who have finished well you will persevere. The reason you don't have models from the present is because you don't know how they are going to finish. Get your models from history and from the Bible because the last chapter has been written.

I wrote something the other day on leadership trying to stay within 140 characters to put on social media that is Biblical. What I put out there is really a modification of the leadership maxim from Campus Outreach which was basically think big, start (act) small, go deep and then I added build high. A man responded to what I put and he said 'Great Harry, I have one more – finish strong.'

I got the chance to watch my daughters run all the way through college. They were distance runners. They learned one of the secrets which was that every mile is better than the previous mile and you're best mile is your last mile. When you get to the end you don't have anything left. So that is what Timothy learned from the Apostle Paul.

Then Paul goes from the past to the present by telling Timothy so you have followed now here is what you do. II Timothy 3:14–17 says [14] *But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it [15] and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. [16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

Paul now says to Timothy that he is to keep learning with his mentors. So he not only has models but he is to have mentors that he continues to learn from. Timothy not only learned from Paul but he learned from Lois and Eunice, his mother and grandmother and Paul charges him to keep on learning. If you stop learning leave the ministry and leadership in Christ's church. Did Jesus not show this to us?

When Jesus came to this earth it says in Luke 2:52, [52] *And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.* Hebrews 5:8 says [8] *Although he (Jesus) was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.* Paul has manifested a life of continued learning so he charges Timothy to do so.

You have to be a verbifore, where you just eat words. Eat and digest knowledge. Don't ever stop learning. Remember from whom you have learned – father, mother, brother and people in the fellowship. Keep learning from them. When you get ordained it doesn't mean you know it all for it just means you want to know it all. Now you want to know it all more than ever before. So get those mentors in your life and keep them in your life and take hold of them with your life. Stay connected to them.

Stay with your pastor. Dr. Barker is way into ministry. In fact this year is his 60th year of ordained ministry. Praise the Lord for that. I can't tell you how often this happens in my life that when I see Dr. Barker he is always reading a book. Then he will look at me and say 'Harry, what have you been reading that will help me?' That's just in the past few years. Pastors must be learners. That is not something you did in the past – I got my theological degree. Learning becomes a way of life where you are constantly reading, meditating, reflecting, thinking, and working your way through the Scriptures which are able to equip you and are sufficient. The Scriptures teach you, reprove you, correct you and train you.

When I got converted I went home and stayed up all night and read the New Testament. The next morning I told my wife I had read the New Testament and she said 'great!' I asked her, 'What's next?' She said 'I think you need to go read it again. God's Word is like a well of glorious artesian water. The deeper you go the fresher, colder and purer it is. It's like a gold mine. The deeper you go the bigger the nuggets and the brighter is the vein of riches. Stay with your learning of the Word of God. Continue with those mentors and those mentors yet that God will bring into your life.

I had seven mentors. Three of those mentors are with Jesus now. I cannot tell you how valuable they have been in my life. That's what I pray for you. Now let's get to the last part as we look to the future. Where are you going? Let's look at II Timothy 4. Now what does the future look like?

II Timothy 4:1–5 says *[1] I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: [2] **preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. [3] For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, [4] and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. [5] **As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*****

[6] For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. [7] I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. [8] Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing. There's your future.

If you don't get prayer and the Word right, everything else will be non-effective. Those are the primary means of grace. I wish I could tell you that every professing believer is going to run to where God's Word is faithfully preached, but no for they will run, unless the Holy Spirit is working in their life, to something that scratches their ears. But you stay the course. You keep preaching the Word. Pastor His people. Be faithful. Set your mind and your heart so that you finish the race. You can't finish unless you start. We are at the formal day of starting your ministry, Westby. Get in the fight to stay in the fight.

This is the first time I've ever participated in an ordination of a man who could kill you seven different ways in 30 seconds. So that congregation better tow the line, that's all I can say. I was recently watching that movie 'Lone Survivor' trying to comprehend the tactical dynamics of what I was watching. It was a pretty faithful rendition and I know it's been doctored some but I always look at this strategically where I believe some marines and rangers could have helped them make better tactical decisions. But their bravery was just astounding. When the rounds came in and they were hit, the first question was 'are you hit?' and the second question was 'are

you still in the fight?’ The third thing I noticed was the answer and that was ‘I’m never leaving the fight.’

We’re in a war and praise God it’s already been won at the cross but it’s a real war. We fight with the weapons of the Spirit. We fight with the armor of Christ and you are leading the army of the Lord. Now you are never more than second in command for the Captain of the Lord of Hosts is in command. He has given us our weapons, our call and our mission and you’re going to get hit. There will be incoming so here’s what you do; stay in the fight, finish the race and don’t look for your reward here. Look for your reward there.

I love the illustration Paul uses in verse 7; [7] *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.* They are sports metaphors, military metaphors and then he goes back to the temple as he says ‘I’ve been poured out as a drink offering.’ It is not a burnt offering. With a burnt offering you have ashes left. When you get to the end of your life and ministry with a drink offering, there is nothing left for you gave it all to Him who gave His all for you.

This is a glorious privilege in life so I would just remind you of what it says. Be sober minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist. By the way, evangelism is a work and I can’t help but think of that phrase ‘be sober minded.’ Do you know how many times in the Bible that it calls Christians to be sober? Don’t be drunk with wine but be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). Sober means temperate, identified by moderation. In other words, the only things that have your complete affections and allegiance is Jesus. Everything else in life you’re sober – you’re not drunk with their appeals or practices and this applies to even good things.

The only thing that has you without reservation is Jesus Himself. Yes you have hobbies, likes, idiosyncrasies, and things you’re interested in but none of them take the domination of your affections, allegiance and all of your heart. Jesus is the One you adore and give yourself to. Not only are you to be sober but you are to be a minister of the Word. You be sober minded. Your mind is filled with Jesus and the Word. Don’t let anything else grab your mind to lead you off. Stay sober minded.

It’s very interesting to me that the Gospels take great pains to tell you two things about Jesus. One He is the Son of God who came in the flesh and He is the Son of Man. He is fully God and fully Man in one person – two complete natures with no confusion or competition. As the Gospel take pains to let you know of His full humanity it constantly gives you the display of Jesus’ appetites, affections, never with any sin but also His emotional life. Three times the Bible tells us He was angry with the righteousness of God, not the anger of man. It tell us He wept. Interestingly, there is one human emotion the Gospels never record about Jesus. It never says He laughed.

Don’t stop reading this and say Harry said that Jesus never laughed because there is no way you could be on a three year road trip with Peter and not laugh. I am sure Jesus laughed but I think the Gospel writers don’t record it because they are reminding us as Gospel ministers and as Christians, we are about sober issues – heaven, hell, life, freedom from sin, eternity. We are about that which everyone else wants to avoid and deny and we love to tell people that there is God who loves you and is ready to save you. Be sober minded. Let’s pray.

Prayer:

Father, I thank You so much for the time we could be together in Your Word. I thank You for my brother, his life, his ministry and for those that surround him and his family. I thank You O God for the ministry. We who are sinners saved by grace, in Your kind Providence You have

allowed us the sacred calling of preaching the Word of God and without the hearing of the Word no one can be saved. You have called us to that glorious ministry to lead Your church in the Great Commission and the Great Commandment with a great commitment and granted that to us as teaching elders and Gospel ministers. Now You have called and added one more to that legion of ministers of the Gospel. I pray for this day and I thank You for it. I look with anticipation to that Day when Westby along with a Godly wife and children who rise up and know and follow the Lord and men and women who have been affected by his life and ministry. Praise Your Name for You not only got him started on this race and into the fight but You will keep him. You will rescue him when he needs to be rescued. You will revive him and refresh him as he having learned from models, and will continue to learn from models and mentors. Then by the grace of God he will preach the Word in the presence of God and the coming of Christ and the Judgment Seat, for I pray this in Jesus' Name, Amen.

I have one final word for Westby. The reason the Apostle Paul was able to finish well and anticipate that Timothy would finish well were those three things he said for the future in his ministry; I charge you in the presence of God, in the soon appearing of Christ and the Judgment Seat to preach the Word. Dare I paraphrase the prince of preachers Charles Spurgeon; in your ministry always feel the eye lash of God upon you, His presence. Hear the footsteps of Jesus for He's coming and hear the gavel of Judgment Seat for everybody you minister to will appear there one day and you have their only answer – Jesus Christ, preach the Word.