

# THE LIFE

EMBRACING THE LIFE OF A CHRIST-FOLLOWER

Part 2: The Picture Of A Disciple  
Unit 6: A Disciple Invests In Multiplication  
**Lesson 47: The Practice of Disciple-making**

**What we want students to learn:** To have a greater understanding of what is involved in disciple-making.

**What we want students to do with what they've learned:** To be inspired to disciple another believer and continue to see lives transformed by the Gospel for years to come.

**Scripture Focus:** 2 Timothy 2:1-7

**Supporting Scripture:** 2 Timothy 2:22-26.

**Overview:** One of the great misconceptions about disciple-making is that it is reserved for the most mature, most experienced Christians. In other words, adults. The only issue with this is that Scripture never makes this case. Scripture doesn't divide or distinguish the call based on age. And it certainly doesn't reserve the right for the spiritually mature (when the Great Commission as given, the disciples were anything but spiritually mature). The students in your ministry are called to lead other people deeper in their faith. In other words, they are called to make disciples. But what does that look like? While the answer to this question is bigger than this single lesson, this lesson will seek to provide a few examples of what making disciples looks like for your students, encouraging them to embrace these practices as they seek to disciple others.

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## Teacher Prep Video

Each *LIFE* lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These are short videos designed to help you grasp the main point of the lesson as you prepare to teach.

To access your *LIFE* lesson 47 Teacher Prep Video, login to your Lesson Manager, navigate to lesson 47, and click on the "Background" tab. You'll notice the Teacher Prep Video near the top of the Lesson Manager window.

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## Bible Background

The *Bible Background* is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. *The Details* gives you background info for each book. *The Setting* informs you of what's happening in and around the passage. *The Main Point* gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every **YM360** Bible Study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know *who* wrote the book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **What's the big deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the *Bible Background* to help summarize the context.

## The Details

- **Author:** Though in the last 200 years or so there have been efforts by some scholars to shed doubt on Paul's authorship of both 1 and 2 Timothy, their arguments aren't very compelling.
- **Time frame:** Most scholars believe Paul wrote these letters to Timothy, his apprentice in ministry, between Paul's first and second imprisonment in Rome, although some scholars believe that Paul penned 2 Timothy while in his final imprisonment before he was executed. By most accounts, this would place the writing of 1 and 2 Timothy sometime around 64–65 AD, though 2 Timothy could be as late as 67 AD.

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- **Purpose:** Paul tells Timothy in the first epistle to continue to combat false teachings. In addition, Paul gives Timothy specific instructions on how to protect against such teaching, including how to install faithful leadership in the church at Ephesus. 2 Timothy, we see Paul passing along his final words to Timothy. 2 Timothy can be thought of as a personal note from an old man awaiting his death to a young, son-like figure. It's personal, tender at times, encouraging, and practical.

## The Setting

Paul wrote this letter to Timothy from a Roman prison. Paul anticipated his execution would be soon. As Paul loved Timothy and considered him a son in the faith, the setting is of loving last words from a father to a son meant to guide and encourage Timothy in the ministry. When you are down to your last words, you speak about that which is most important. Paul's letter to Timothy is centered on the Gospel. Paul admonishes Timothy to guard the Gospel, suffer for the Gospel, and continue the Gospel.

## The Main Point

The pattern of continuing the Gospel is established. Paul has shared everything he knows with Timothy. Now, he wants Timothy to take what he knows and share it with faithful men who will continue to do the same. We learn. We teach others what we know. This is the pattern of discipleship.

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## Lesson Plan

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called *The Lead In*; the Bible study section called *The Main Event*; and an application-focused segment called *The Last Word*.

### The Lead In

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- **Goal:** To get the students thinking about what it takes for something to spread or "go viral."
- **Set-Up:** You'll need the ability to preview and show the following YouTube video:
  - <http://www.today.com/video/today/56714235>

FIRST, begin by asking the students if they've seen any Facebook posts or YouTube videos recently that have gone viral. Ask something like:

- **What's the funniest viral post or video that you've seen?**
  - Answers will vary.

NEXT, show them the YouTube video about a teacher's Facebook post that went viral and spread around the world. After the video is over, ask something like:

- **What caused her post to go viral? On Facebook specifically, what helps a post spread?**
  - *Answer:* Her post started getting numerous "likes" and "shares." The more "likes" and "shares" it got, the more it spread.
- **What if Facebook didn't have a "share" button? Do you think the post would have gotten that far? Who would have seen it?**
  - *Answer:* No, it wouldn't have gotten that far at all. The only people that would have seen it would have been her friends. Even if she had tens of thousands of Facebook friends, it still wouldn't have been considered viral.
- **What does the "share" button cause to happen? Why is it the most important part of a post going viral on Facebook?**
  - *Answer:* It multiplies the amount of people that see the post. Now, not just your friends see the post, but your friends' friends see it. And then they share it and their friends see it and the multiplication continues.

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FINALLY, explain to your students that today you're going to talk about the spread of the Gospel message and how it can go viral. Say:

- **It might be easy to think that large groups of people hearing a famous preacher or evangelist is the best way for it to spread. But that's kind of like a post without a share button. The quickest way for things to multiply is for it to get shared person-by-person.**

Transition into *The Main Event* portion of your lesson.

## The Main Event

- **Goal:** For students to gain a greater understanding of what is involved in disciple-making.
- **Set-Up:** You may benefit from a dry-erase board, but it's not critical. Make sure students have a Bible or that they are able to look along with a friend.

FIRST, have the students find 2 Timothy 2 in their Bible or Bible app. While they're finding it, use the information in the *Bible Background* to help them understand the context of this passage. Read or have a student read 2 Timothy 2:1-2. Ask something like:

- **What is Paul encouraging Timothy to do in these verses?**
  - *Answer:* He's encouraging Timothy to remain strong in Christ and pass on His teachings to others.
- **Why is this so critical? What happens to the Gospel when we do this?**
  - *Answer:* It's critical for the Gospel message to continue to spread. When we're faithful to pass on the teachings of Christ, the church multiplies and more and more people come to know and follow Jesus.

THEN, explain to your students that in the next few verses you're about to look at, Paul uses the examples of three different occupations to paint a picture of what it looks like to make disciples. Read or have a student read 2 Timothy 2:3-7. Ask something like:

- **What are the three occupations that Paul uses as examples in this passage?**
  - *Answer:* Soldier, Athlete, and Farmer.
- **Let's talk about a soldier first. Paul calls Timothy to join him in suffering, "like a good soldier of Jesus Christ." What might this suffering look like for you or for others today?**
  - Answers will vary. Christians in America that stand up for their faith may be ostracized or belittled, they might be passed over for a job, or not given an invite to an event. Christians in other countries without religious liberties risk their livelihood, imprisonment, or even their own lives.
- **How do you feel about being asked to suffer for Christ's sake?**
  - Answers will vary. Talk through any fears of persecution that are presented. It is important to remember that our God is worthy of anything that we could suffer or sacrifice in this life. We know that Paul suffered dearly during his time on earth, enduring hard work, prison, being flogged, receiving forty lashes minus one five times, being beaten with rods three times, being pelted with stones, shipwrecked three times, constantly on the move, without sleep, enduring hunger, thirst, cold, nakedness, and dangers from Jews and Gentiles (2 Corinthians 11).
- **Soldiers live with an awareness that a war is going on around them. They train for it and participate in it. How easy is it for you to get distracted from the eternal things that really matter?**
  - Answers will vary. Many may struggle doing so many "good" things that we miss what is best. Social media, extracurricular activities, school work, part time jobs, Netflix, etc. can all take up huge amounts of time. These things are not bad within themselves, but we need to be diligent not to let them inhibit our walk with the Lord and the call to make disciples of all nations.

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- **Is there any “civilian activity” or relationship that is currently prohibiting you from making disciples?**
  - Answers will vary. Now would be a great time to share something specific from your past that kept you so busy that you did not give God first place.
- **Next, let’s talk about the example Paul uses of competing as an athlete. How does this translate to the Christian life?**
  - Answers will vary. Athletes have to put in time, blood, sweat, and often tears to become the best in their field. We cannot expect to spontaneously grow close to the Lord. It takes diligence. It takes time. And it may even require tears as we learn to let go of the things of this world and cling to Christ.
- **Have you ever cheated yourself in your walk with the Lord or been tempted to do so? In what way?**
  - Answers will vary. We can cheat ourselves by working on the outward action without allowing God to transform who we are. That’s behavior modification over heart change. The Pharisees of the New Testament are a good illustration of looking religious without being sincere. New Testament church members Ananias and Sapphira told a lie because they were more concerned with “looking good” than being righteous (Acts 5). Sometimes our first reaction to our own sin is to hide or cover it up, when what we really need is to confess and repent so that Christ may restore.

NEXT, explain that the final example is that of a farmer. Remind the students that the days of a farmer are not glamorous. Whether taking care of crops or livestock, a farmer is out in the weather working hard. There is no one there to cheer him own, but we do read here that the hardworking farmer should receive the first of the crops. Ask something like:

- **What spiritual crops do you think Paul is referring to here?**
  - Answers will vary. There are 66 Bible verses that reference sowing and reaping. The emphasis for new life and growth is always that the hard work will pay off.
- **How do these three examples relate to the call to pass on the teachings of Christ and make disciples?**
  - *Answers:* Good soldiers, athletes, and farmers are all very disciplined. They’re willing to put in the hard work, suffer through hardships, and remain diligent in their calling. In the same way, the Christ-follower that is going to be about disciple making has to have the same characteristics. First, because making disciples is not always easy. Second, because it’s important for newer believers to see others more mature that themselves suffer and contend for the faith. It’s a source of encouragement to them.

THEN, read or have a student to read 2 Timothy 2:22-26. Explain that what Paul offers to Timothy here is some great advice that will help him in his relationship with God and greatly serve him as he disciples other believers. You may opt to make a list of the instructions from this passage on the board as the passage is being read. Ask something like:

- **Looking over this list, what is most challenging for you?**
  - Answers will vary. If you wrote the instructions on the board, circle the ones that the students answer with.
- **Why are these instructions critical for us to follow if we are going to be making disciples?**
  - *Answer:* We have to be seeking and following Christ ourselves if we are going to teach others to follow Him. That doesn’t mean we’re perfect and don’t make mistakes. But it does mean that the direction our life is heading is toward Christ and what He’s commanded us to do.

FINALLY, explain to the students that just as a soldier executes a battle plan, an athlete follows a training regimen, and a farmer chronicles the seasons to know when to sow and reap, you need a plan for drawing closer to God and leading others to do the same. Say:

- **We must examine ourselves, pray, and let the Lord lead us. All that we learn from God and His Word we must share with others. Disciples of Christ make disciples for Christ. Once you know it, practice it, and live it, you can share it!**

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Ask if there are any questions, then transition into *The Last Word*.

## The Last Word

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- **Goal:** For students to be inspired to disciple another believer and continue to see lives transformed by the Gospel for years to come.
- **Set-Up:** The ability to preview and show the following YouTube video:
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ums9X9xJrZA>.

FIRST, remind the students about the video they watched at the beginning of the lesson and your discussion on how Facebook posts can go viral. Explain to them that you're now going to look a little closer at how this relates to disciple making and the spread of the Gospel. Show the YouTube video "The Great Commission... 37 Years."

THEN, after the students have watched the video, ask something like:

- **Did those numbers surprise you? Why or why not?**
  - Answers will vary.
- **What will this type of discipleship cost us?**
  - Answers will vary. It will cost us time and energy. We can't passively invest in people to the level Paul is talking about. It takes effort and intentionality.
- **Does this calling to make disciples intimidate you? Why or why not?**
  - Answers will vary.
- **How do we get started?**
  - Answers will vary. Explain to them that it doesn't have to be forced. It simply involves sharing their faith with others. At some point, when someone they know decides to follow Jesus, or maybe to take their decision to follow Him more closely, that is an opportunity to invest in that person's life and teach them more about what it means to follow Christ.

NEXT, reemphasize to your students the necessity for us all to have a Paul – someone that is more spiritually mature that pours into our lives, imitates Christ, holds us accountable, and helps us in our spiritual walk. But, equally as important for those of us that are not brand new in our faith is the need to have a Timothy – someone that is less spiritually mature that we pour into, imitate Christ for, hold accountable, and help in his or her spiritual walk.

THEN, ask your students to break into groups for prayer. Take this time to thank God for the mentors He has placed in your life. Pray that God would reveal a person that you can come alongside and mentor or pray for that person by name if it is known.

FINALLY, allow time for any closing thoughts or questions from your students.

- Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're posting them on Instagram, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.
- Use the *Social Media* guide to stay in touch with students via text or Instagram, and to encourage them to follow through with reading their devotions.

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## We Want To Hear From You . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?

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- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at [feedback@youthministry360.com](mailto:feedback@youthministry360.com).