

An Unfinished Life Part 5

My days come and go swifter than the click of knitting needles, and then the yarn runs out—an unfinished life! Job 7:6 (MSG)

Watch your step, use your head, make the most of every chance you get... Ephesians 5:16 (MSG)

You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NLT)

I solemnly urge you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who will someday judge the living and the dead when he comes to set up his Kingdom: Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching. For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths. But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you. 2 Timothy 4:1-5 (NLT)

Motivational Gifts:

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us. Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. Romans 12:1-5 (NLT)

*In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly. Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. **Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.*** Romans 12:6-13 (NLT)

Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality. Romans 12:12-13 (NLT)

Ministry Gifts:

*For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all. However, he has given each one of us a special gift through the generosity of Christ. That is why the Scriptures say, "When he ascended to the heights, he led a crowd of captives and gave gifts to his people." Notice that it says "he ascended." This clearly means that Christ also descended to our lowly world. And the same one who descended is the one who ascended higher than all the heavens, so that he might fill the entire universe with himself. **Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.** This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. **He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.*** Ephesians 4:4-16 (NLT)

Obeys your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. Hebrews 13:17 (ESV)

Definition of submission: to willingly place yourself under the authority of another for the purpose of accomplishing the same mission.

- **Submission to authority is ultimately about faith.**

Biblical Example - The Centurion

- **An act of submission is an act of faith.**

Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue." Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick. **Luke 7:1-10 (NKJV)**

Several Things We Learn From the Centurion About Authority:

- **He recognized the authority given to Jesus.**

Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "**Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof.**" **Luke 7:6 (NKJV)**

I cannot do anything on my own. **The Father sent me, and he is the one who told me how to judge.** I judge with fairness, because I obey him, and I don't just try to please myself. **John 5:30 (CEV)**

But I have a greater witness than John—my teachings and my miracles. **The Father gave me these works to accomplish, and they prove that he sent me.** **John 5:36 (NLT)**

I have come with my Father's authority, and you have not welcomed me. But you will welcome people who come on their own. **John 5:43 (CEV)**

So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man on the cross, then you will understand that I am he. **I do nothing on my own but say only what the Father taught me.**" **John 8:28 (NLT)**

Jesus said to them, "**If God were really your Father, you would love me, because I came from God and now I am here. I did not come by my own authority; God sent me.**" **John 8:42 (NCV)**

No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. **For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded.**" **John 10:18 (NLT)**

- **He recognized his position in relation to Jesus**

Therefore **I did not even think myself worthy to come to You.** **Luke 7:7 (NKJV)**

So when he heard about Jesus, **he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant.** **Luke 7:3 (NKJV)**

- **He demonstrates his understanding of how authority works.**

For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." **Luke 7:8 (NKJV)**

- **He shows that he grasps both the responsibility and benefits of authority.**

And a certain centurion's servant, **who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die.** **Luke 7:2 (NKJV)**

But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." **Luke 7:7b (NKJV)**

And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, "**for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue.**" **Luke 7:4-5 (NKJV)**

- **He also recognized that authority does not have to be in proximity to be respected or dismissed.**

When Jesus heard these things, **He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith,**

not even in Israel!" And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.

Luke 7:9-10 (NKJV)

Our Faith's Foundation is in Our Relationship with the Father:

All who follow the leading of God's Spirit are God's own sons. Nor are you meant to relapse into the old slavish attitude of fear—you have been adopted into the very family circle of God and you can say with a full heart, "Father, my Father". The Spirit himself endorses our inward conviction that we really are the children of God. Think what that means. If we are his children we share his treasures, and all that Christ claims as his will belong to all of us as well! Yes, if we share in his suffering we shall certainly share in his glory.

Romans 8:14-17 (J.B. Phillips)