

Entrust; That is going to cost you, remember why you follow!

2 Timothy 2:3-13

Vine & Branch Community Church

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Maybe you have seen some of the “epic fails” videos on YouTube; people doing dumb things with heavy consequences captured on video. One of those videos is titled “that is going to cost you” and is a montage of videos of people making costly mistakes at work/jobsites. Or maybe you have just heard that catch phrase, said in a sarcastic tone, “OK...that is going to cost you!”

In my late teens after I became a Christian, I often heard about the cost of discipleship, what it costs to follow Jesus, the cost of obedience. That is true, following Jesus costs. It is a message that is largely gone from Christianity today. Most often Christianity is presented today from a marketing perspective as to what benefits you gain when you follow Jesus. The biggest churches in our country (and around the world) are peddling a message about what Jesus can do for you, how he can fix your life, and how he came so you can realize the inner you, provide you freedom, give you the life you always wanted.

If you haven't heard of him, Steven Furtick is a popular, but false teacher. Last year around this time he taught a message where his primary thesis statement was this, “the process of discipleship is not God changing you into something else. It's Him revealing who you've been all along.” I have watched a lot of Furtick's teaching, this phrase captures the essence of his teaching; he is warping the Gospel to center around the self-esteem of individuals.

Furtick's false teaching is costly. Discipleship isn't about our “inner-you” being released, discipleship is about (paraphrasing Jesus words), *Denying yourself, dying to “inner-you” picking up your cross and becoming who Jesus is.* The process of becoming like Jesus... costs. **Following Jesus is going to cost you! Remember why you follow.**

This is Paul's message to Timothy, following Jesus costs. **NOT** following Jesus Costs. Choose your cost! Choose your cost, remember why you follow.

The Last time we were together Kevin Salsbery started off our Entrust series with this section of 2 Timothy 2, “*You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, ² and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.*” What follows these verses is this, “*Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.*”

What Kevin reminded us of is that **the purpose of relationships in the church is to spread the truth.** Or, said another way, **Relationship is the vehicle by which truth is carried.** We found in the beginning part of 2 Timothy that Paul is urging Timothy to pass on the truth that had been passed on to him. Truth had been forged into Timothy's life through relationships (Lois & Eunice as well as Paul) and now Timothy was to forge that same TRUTH into others through relationships.

One of the points I really appreciated that Kevin brought out was that in 2nd Timothy Paul didn't detail exactly what Timothy was to say, what specific truths he was to communicate (assumed) as much as he emphasized what **kind of life was to pair up with Timothy's doctrine** as he carried the truth into the lives of others. We need to see the importance of this: if **TRUTH is carried** into lives **through RELATIONSHIP**, then the life that carries the truth is vitally IMPORTANT. And this is where Paul puts the emphasis on his letters to Timothy; Paul tells Timothy that adjusting your life to be a vessel that carries the Gospel is a costly life, but worth it... so remember why you follow!

Today, we are studying, 2 Tim 2:3-13, Paul strengthens Timothy with the truth that the life that carries truth into the lives of others is a life that costs! Paraphrasing the teaching from last time as a bridge to

this week, we might hear Paul say to Timothy something like this, “Timothy, through relationship (your life and doctrine); forge the truth into the lives of men who will teach others, and that way of life... is going to cost you!”

² and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. ³ Share in **suffering** as a good soldier of Christ Jesus...”

Entrust to faithful men... share in suffering. It is tempting to hear Paul’s admonition to Timothy as something passive, “if you forge the truth in the lives of others, suffering will be a consequence.” But Paul is not suggesting a passive/reactive suffering but rather an active/proactive suffering. Let me clarify what I mean by active vs. passive suffering; In 1 Peter 4:13 Peter says, “*But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings.*” The Greek word Peter uses for suffering is “Pathema” it means something that is undergone; a hardship or difficulty you face outside of your control. It is something that happens to you, something you respond to but not something you initiate or actively choose.

But for Timothy, Paul uses a different word, “sugkakopatheo” it means to be a partaker, to volitionally take part in, to share in companionship to partner, to actively chose it. And to help Timothy quantify what he means he uses three examples:

⁴ No **soldier** gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. ⁵ An **athlete** is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶ It is the hard-working **farmer** who ought to have the first share of the crops. ⁷ Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

In each of the examples; the person forgoes (willfully chooses to suffer the loss) of **one thing for the sake of another**, and from these examples Timothy is to gain and extrapolate insight into why he chooses to suffer and to remember the benefits/outcomes and Why he chooses to follow:

- The **soldier** suffers the loss of distractions for the sake of **pleasing his leader**
- The **athlete** suffers the loss of cutting corners in his training for the sake of **winning**
- The **farmer** suffers the loss of immediate ease for the sake of a **long-term harvest**

Or we could say it positively this way

- The soldier chooses pleasing his leader over being distracted
- The athlete chooses winning over cutting corners in his training
- The farmer chooses a bountiful harvest over daily ease

Remember; **TRUTH is carried** into lives **through RELATIONSHIP**, and therefore, the life that carries the truth is vitally IMPORTANT. Developing the kind of life that transfers truth from one life to another costs... but remember why you follow.

Paul urges Timothy: share in suffering for pleasing your leader, for winning, for the harvest. This life will cost you, but remember why you follow. In this next session Paul reminds Timothy to focus on the why. He starts with Jesus, offers himself as an example, then ends with a liturgy that unites he and Timothy in all their life and ministry doings.

⁸Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, ⁹ for which I am [choosing to suffer], bound with chains as a criminal. But the **word of God is not bound!** ¹⁰ Therefore I **endure everything for the sake of the elect**, that they also may **obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus** with eternal glory. ¹¹ The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; ¹² if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; ¹³ if we are faithless, he remains faithful— for he cannot deny himself.

Paul calls Timothy to put another thing in his mind; **“Remember Jesus”** ... “he is our example, He suffered ultimately for the sake of others. He proactively, chose suffering for others, like I am doing Timothy, Like I am calling you to do as well.”

John 10:14-18: *“I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.... For this reason, the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”*

*“By this we know love, that **he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.**” (1 John 3:16)*

It is important that we talk about the cost of following Jesus, there definitely is a cost. Again, Paul reminds Timothy of it here in our passage. However, we often hear in the church: following Jesus costs, the cost of discipleship, the cost of obedience... and that is often said with gloom, sobriety, and somberness. **We sometimes talk as if following Jesus is the only life with costs.** We forget/blinded to the fact that NOT following Jesus also has costs, both in this life and the one to come. Following Jesus has costs, so remember why you follow. But also, NOT following Jesus has costs.

This is why there is an embedded warning which Paul warns Timothy and his hearers in the liturgy that he shares. It is believed that verses 11-13 are a liturgy that the early church would say together. In the middle is a warning; “if we deny him, he will also deny us.” The liturgy is remembering the words of Jesus from Matthews Gospel 10:32-33 *“So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, ³³ but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.”*

Jesus is clearly stating that he will acknowledge to the Father everyone who acknowledge by their life and doctrine that Jesus is God come in the flesh to rescue us from sin. IOW: When the time come when everyone will give accounting of their life before God, Jesus will vouch for those who embraced him as covering for their sin. He will stand alongside them before God the Father as The Righteous One who vouches for those who clung to him for life with their life. But for those who denied him, said, “I don’t need Jesus, I don’t need a savior.” Then he will also vouch for them, saying, “yes, this one denied me, this one denied me and wanted nothing to do with me, the did not want to nor do they belong to me.”

Here is the truth: Following Jesus costs; “if you die... if you endure...” But also, NOT Following Jesus, or following YOURSELF, going your own way COSTS. It is not “Following Jesus costs, and another life you choose will be less costly!” it is, “Whatever direction you choose will cost you in some way. This is a main thrust of the first 10 chapters of the book of Proverbs: Wisdom costs, “though it COSTS all you have get wisdom, get understanding...” (4:7). And foolishness also costs, (woman folly) “in the end she (foolish life) is bitter as wormwood... her feet go down to death, her steps lay hold of hell, she does not ponder the path of life... (5:4-6).

Paul reminds Timothy, a life that forges truth into the life of other costs, but remember why you follow: If we die with him, **we will also live with him**, if we endure we will also **reign with him**... even if we are faithless (like Peter), he remains faithful – for he cannot deny himself.

Application:

1. Gain and extrapolate insight from the examples offered of a soldier an athlete and a soldier. Remember that we are always giving something up for the sake of something else.
2. Remember the reason why you follow Christ in spite of the cost. Recall the goal of pleasing your King, gaining the prize, and partaking of the harvest.