Step into It - Part 2
"Our Calling as Christians…"
November 12th, 2023

Intro:
STEPPING IN GUM - It just won't go away!
- **That's kind of like Politics in the next year!!! Haha**
- **It's just going to keep coming back & sticking to us!**

- So we're going to have to be So Proactive in order to not let all of the noise & rhetoric & fear stick to us.
- **MIP: So many of us feel like, "I want to follow Jesus / I want to keep the Peace / I don't want to be overcome by fear or React or Overreact when I hear the news or people in the office arguing about it!!!"**
  - ***That's why we're doing this series NOW!!!***
    - **If you missed last week…**
- **Today, I want to show us what the Bible says we are called to do!**

PRAY

Background - Timothy is a young pastor in a Pegan City / Morally Bankrupt / New Christians who are trying to figure out how to live in such a way to please God. -Potentially Last Correspondence Paul may ever have w/ him!

2 Timothy 4:1 "In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living & the dead, and in view of His appearing and His kingdom, I give you this charge…"

v. 2 "Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction."

v. 3-5a "For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths."

v. 5 "But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry."

- Inside these verses are the key to how I believe God wants us to live in our Culture today! - We are living in a Modern Day Ephesus!

4 Principles we Must Know for Living Godly in our Time:

"We must know…"

1. Our Charge. (STAY ON THIS SLIDE for ALL of Point 1)

A. This is a Massive Charge!

- Paul felt so strongly about this; did you catch how he framed it? "In the Presence of God & of Christ Jesus who will judge!!!"

- My goodness! Remember… Potentially his final letter to Timothy, maybe EVER, ends w/ this!!!

- I CHARGE YOU!!! v. 2 "Preach the Word!"

- Not Preach Politics / Agenda / or a Policy / or Moral Values!

- Preach… the WORD!!!

B. It's going to be so easy for us in the next year to get our Focus off of this one thing!

- We are going to be tempted & pulled in every direction BUT the direction of God & His Word.

- There are 3 things that will last forever… only 3!

1) God 2) God's Word 3) The Souls of Mankind.

C. MIP: Our Charge as His Followers is this 1 thing: Preach the Word!

- Paul says we will be Judged for how we did THAT!!!

- You may not "Preach" from this platform, but each of us have influence w/ our friends / family / co-workers & we need to remember that our Charge is to Represent HIM more than Anything else this year!!!

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"We must know…"

2. Our Conviction.

A. Paul tells Timothy to be ready for the Snowbirds!

- In season & Out of season / in traffic & out of traffic! haha

B. In all Seriousness, Paul makes it clear what the Role of the Local Church is in the Culture of the Day…

- To Correct, Rebuke & Encourage.

- We call these: Know, Love & Challenge! (SLIDE)

C. We have taught these for years - We see these 3 principles of pastoring people well over & over & this is another example of them… in reverse order.

- Correct -> Challenge / Rebuke -> Know / Encourage -> Love

D. MIP: Church Family - This is our Responsibility as pastors & leaders in your life.

- To help you know how to live in Every Season you are in personally & Every Season we are in Culturally!

- We all need Leaders & Others around us who will faithfully Know, Love AND Challenge us!

E. We all love to be Loved & Known, but how are we doing, honestly, when the Leaders around us Challenge us?!?

- In this Series / But more than that, our Group Leader / Team Leader / a Staff Member / our Spouse!!!

- The Body of Christ is at its best when it is doing these 3 things in a Healthy way!!!

F. But Notice - Paul also says that we are to do these things,

(SLIDE) "With great patience & careful instruction."

- IOW - 2 Applications:

1) Patience w/ other believers - We must be so patient w/ each other.

- Others are not where we are on their journey of following Christ, that's okay.

- They don't need our Judgment, they need our Encour!

2) Patience w/ the Unbelieving World - We have to stop expecting Unbelievers to act like Believers!

- We are now living in a nation of Darkness & yelling at the darkness / Screaming / Demeaning / Judging / Condemning it won't change it!

- The only thing that changes Darkness is a Light!

- If we want our Nation to Change, then we must stop screaming at the Darkness & start turning on the Light!!!

G. MLK Quote - "Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that."

H. MIP: God wants us as His Sons & Daughters to be Patient w/ the unbelieving world.

- EMPATHY is a Lost Virtue in our world today.

- We are so quick to judge others that we have forgotten to put ourselves in their shoes.

- We don't know why they are the way they are or vote the way they vote or have chosen the lifestyle they have chosen.

J. If we can be Peo. of Empathy & Compassion instead of Judgment & Condemnation for those who don't see the world as we do, then we will find Magnificent Openness to our Message we are called to "Preach!"

- STORY OF HOMELESS WOMAN - "Tell me your story…"

- She did - It broke my heart!

- Then I thought: "Well, she probably doesn't vote like me so I can't love her & help her!"

- That's the beauty of the Love of Jesus! None of that matters when we see through the eyes of Empathy!

… back to the text…

v. 3-5a "For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths."

3. Our Culture.

A. I believe we are now living in this time that Paul saw!

- B/c it sounds like he is describing our SOCIAL MEDIA FEEDS!!!

- I have done a lot of study & research on it & it is Stacked against us! - Next week…

B. Church - Our Social Media Feeds are designed to become Echo Chambers (Teachers) created by our own Clicks & Likes!

- YOUTUBE - Proven Fact: 6 "Suggestions from a Conspiracy Theory!"

*** Here's the Deception: We all think we are Immune to it's influence, but we aren't! (Don't Miss Next Week!)**

C. The Reality is: Most of Us are being Discipled by our News Feeds!

- Think about it: How much time HONESTLY, do we spend on Social Media or Watching the News / week?

- How much time do we spend TOTAL in the Word / Worship / Prayer & in God's House / w/ God's People???

- I have a Feeling that its 2 to 1 or 3 to 1 Minimum!

F. Please don't hear condemnation, it's just a "System of the World" designed to appeal to our "itching ears."

- Unless we Proactively & Consciously fight against it, it will just pull us in ever so subtly. - MORE NEXT WEEK!

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v. 5 "But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry."

4. Our Calling.

A. In v. 5, Paul gives us our Calling!

1) Keep your head in all situations.

- Church - We must Live Differently than the world around us.
    - You can be Conservative in your Values & your Policy Leanings but watch for the Anger, the Fear, the Hyperbole, the Divisive Talking & the Opinions that the Media links to a story in order to make it "News!"
        - NOT ENOUGH NEWS TO FILL 24 HOURS ILL.
            - They have to "Hype" it up & "Make up stories" to keep our attention! (Lit. called "the spin room!")

*** Be SO CAREFUL of a Lack of Honor!!!
- It's not okay to Refer to our President by his 1st name or with an adjective attached! (Sleepy Joe or Brandon)
    - It's not Honorable! You wouldn't do that to his face!
    - Or if Jesus were Standing Next to you (Remember He is!!!)
    - We are Called to "Keep our Heads in all situations!"

- & we are called to Pray for our Gov't Leaders. Romans 14
    - NLC PERSON - I CAN'T PRAY FOR HIM / ME - 86 WAYS TO!
        - That means we've "Lost our head."

2) Endure Hardship.
- Truly living like Jesus in our world is NOT going to be easy & in the next year it's going to get even Harder.
    - B/c if we're doing it right, then we won't fit in either side!

THE 4 PRIMARY HUMAN VALUES OF JESUS

1) Man / Woman - Marriage
2) All Peo. & Races are Equal.
3) Life is Sacred. Pro-Life
4) Poor & Marginalized.

- We believe & are <u>FOR ALL 4</u> of them, b/c Jesus was!!!
    - That means, when we are Participating in 1 of these causes, people from "The Other Side," won't like it!
- We are Called to Live in the Middle & It's not going to get Easier!!!

TRUTH OR TRIBE BOOK - QR CODE - QUOTE - PG. 152

- Church - In the Next 12 months, I see a church w/ 4 Locations, filled w/ people who are Passionately following Jesus & who are Diverse in Age, Gender, Ethnicity & Background, who may have Voted differently but all Love God & Love Each Other & Love the Hurting & Broken World around them!!!

- WE. CAN. BE. THAT. CHURCH!!!

3) Do the Work of an Evangelist.

- Paul says This is our Calling! Evangelism!!!

- No matter who is in office or what bill gets passed, our Mission DOES NOT CHANGE!!!

- Some Christians are called to the Political Arena, pray for them!

- Let them Fight & do what they are called to do!

- You stay focused on the Gospel!

- If we get sidetracked by "Issues" & Politics, we will lose our ability to evangelize!

- This is what happened to so many believers & Churches in 2020!

- We don't have to see the church get Polarized & Neutralized again for the sake of Evangelism!

- We are praying for REVIVAL in our Nation & it won't come through Politics!

- It will come when the Believers do the work of an Evangelist!

4) Discharge all the duties - Stay Focused on the Charge!

- Discharge is the Opposite word of Charge!

- IOW- Paul is saying, "Get rid of everything that distracts you from the 1 Charge you have… to Preach the Word!!!"

- Some of us are so caught up in everything else that we're actually not focused on the Gospel like God wants us to be! (Obsessed!)

- MIP: ? What do you need to "Decide to Discharge" for the next 12 months?

3 Practical Challenges for the next 12 Months:

1. Limit your Consumption to 15 minutes / day.

- **Only Read the News / Turn Off Alerts / Turn off the Talking Heads**
    - **They have to fill 24 hrs / day / They end up talking about what someone said about what some said about what someone said!**
- **Remember - They make money from Keeping our Attention!**

2. Spend AT LEAST as much time in Godly things as you do Political things.

3. Be Twice as Committed to God's House as you are to all of that.

- **Get in a Group / Serve Our Cities EVERY Month / Be here Every Sunday / SOAP Faithfully / Listen to Worship more than News /**

- Watch what happens to your Soul / your Mental Health / your Anxiety / & your Relationships when you put all that in it's proper place & put God in His proper place!!!

TIME OF PRAYER