

Study Guide

Monday, August 23. Read 2 Timothy 4:7. As we look at this verse, we know that Paul is sharing with Timothy about his life and that death is coming. He knew that he had a reward awaiting after life on earth has passed. We all would like to be as confident as Paul. However, his own life was a roller coaster experience – filled with ups and downs. As he looked back on his life after turning it over to Christ, he understood that he had done the best he could do. As we pause this day to look back on our life, have we really put forth the effort to be a true disciple of Christ? Have we done all we could do to lead and be examples to our family?

Tuesday, August 24 – Read 1 Corinthians 15:3. Paul shares with his readers in Corinth that his faith, his belief in Christ, was passed on to him. And that he too, wants to pass this faith on. When we think of passing the baton of faith to our children, we must understand the one passing the one receiving are both important. Each one has a responsibility to be in the proper position to make the pass. If you are a parent, each moment, each day and each year provides the opportunity to work on the pass. Your children are watching, observing and mentally taking notes to determine if they really want to receive what you have.

Wednesday, August 25 – Read Philippians 4:8-9. What we put into our mind determines what comes out in our words and actions. Paul tells us to program our mind with thoughts that are true, honorable, right, pure, lovely etc. Examine what you are putting into your mind. Replace harmful input with wholesome material. Read God's word and pray. Ask God to help you focus your mind on what is good and pure. It is not enough to hear and read the Word of God or even to know it well. We must also put it into practice. How easy it is to listen to a sermon and forget what the preacher said. How easy it is to read the Bible and not think about how to live differently. How easy it is to debate what passage means and not live out that meaning. Exposure to God's Word is not enough. It must lead to obedience. And that will be demonstrated by our consistency.

Thursday, August 26 – Read Philippians 3:12-14. Paul said that his goal was to know Christ, to be like Christ, and to be all Christ had in mind for him. This goal took all of Paul's energies. This is a helpful example for us. We should not let anything take our eyes off the goal – knowing Christ. With the single-mindedness of an athlete in training, we must lay aside everything harmful and forsake anything that may distract us from being effective Christians. With so many activities, so many places to take our kids, to many things that occupy our day, how can we lay them aside? Is it possible, we can use some of this busyness to create Faith-moments? What is your attitude when you are hauling kids from one place to the next? What is your attitude when you spend every night at the ball fields or the studio or gym? It might be we lay aside our attitudes and begin having the heart of Christ for all to see.

Friday, August 27 – Read Deuteronomy 6:1-8. This is a book of the Bible that we probably haven't read more than once. But our passage for today provides us with the central theme for all of Deuteronomy. It sets a pattern that helps us to relate the Word of God to our daily lives. We are to love God, think constantly about his commandments, teach his commandments to our children, and live each day by the guidelines in his Word. God emphasized the importance of parents' teaching the Bible to their children. The Church and Christian schools cannot be used to escape from this responsibility. The Bible provides us so many opportunities for object lessons and practical teaching that it would be ashamed to study it only one day week. Eternal truths are most effectively learned in the loving environment of a Christian home.

Saturday, August 28. Read II Timothy 1:6. Clearly Timothy's spiritual gift had been given to him when Paul and the elders had laid their hands on him and set him apart for ministry. God gives all Christians gifts to use to build up the body of Christ. God has also given all parents the gift of raising children. May each of us treat this gift with respect and awe and do our best to honor God in our families.