

GRACE TRANSFORMS

WEEK 7

EQUIP

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.

2 Timothy 2:1-2 (ESV)

SERMON NOTES – EQUIP :: 1

TOPIC _____

SPEAKER _____ DATE _____

TESTAMENT OLD NEW SONGS/HYMNS _____

MOOD 😄 😊 😐 😞 😓 😴 _____

TODAY I AM GRATEFUL FOR _____

KEY POINTS _____ SCRIPTURES _____

NOTES _____

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What stuck out to you as you read this weekend's Scripture passages?

Did these verses raise any questions as you read?

Where do we see Jesus Christ in these verses?

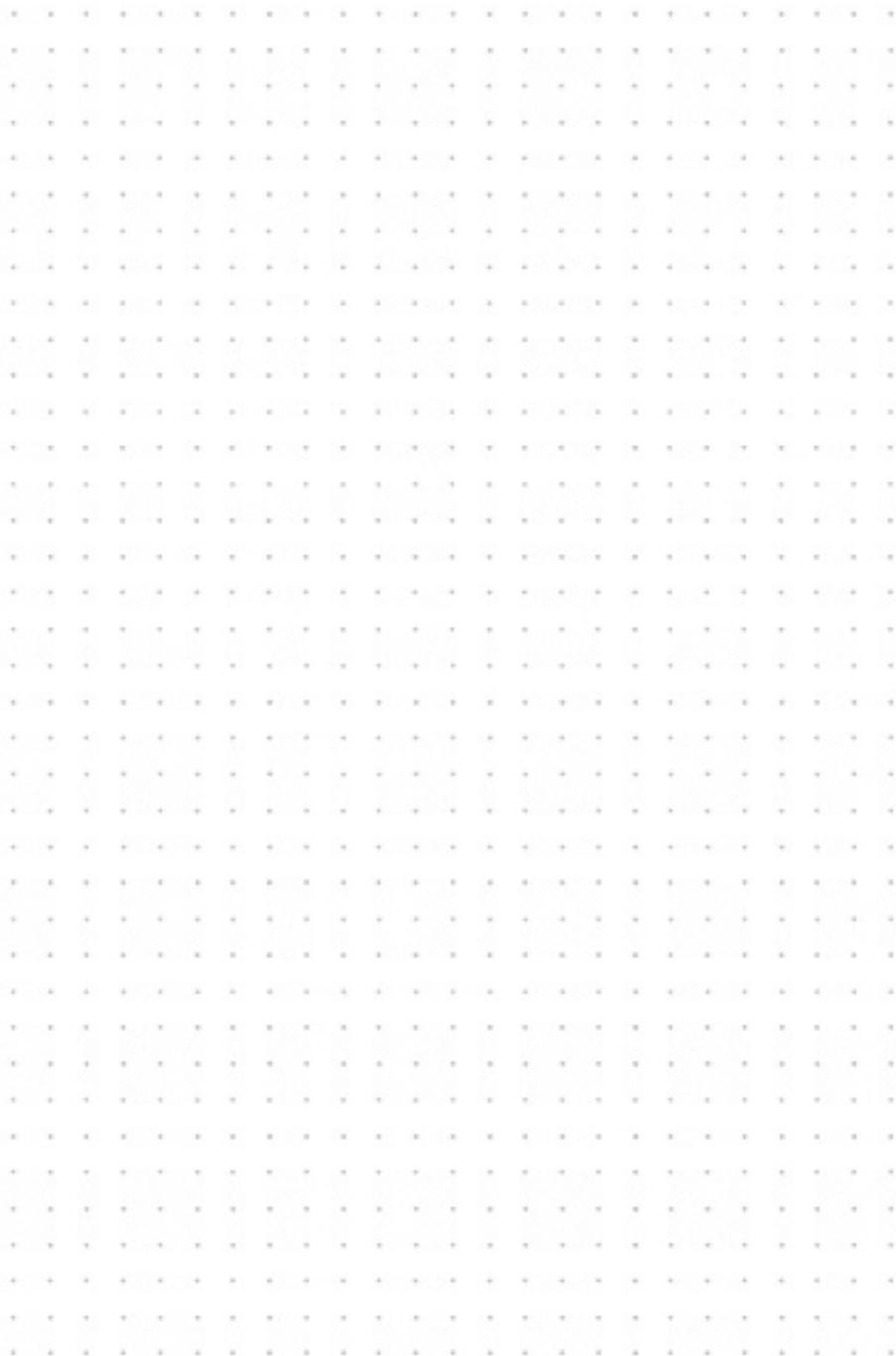
As you read this weekend's Scripture, ask yourself, "Are these verses...

1. teaching me something?"
2. telling me to stop doing something I am doing?"
3. correcting some wrong thinking or behavior?"
4. preparing me to live more effectively for him?"

Write down the name of someone who might benefit from hearing what you've seen in the Bible.

Why is this passage in this particular book of the Bible? What might the Bible lose if this passage was left out? What's the author's main point? *(Try to sum up your answer in one sentence.)*

JOURNAL



INTRODUCTION — EQUIP

Grace Transforms residents of earth into Citizens of Heaven who Equip for Jesus Christ.

The biblical job description for every leadership role in the Body of Christ is “Equip the saints for the work of ministry.”

"And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ,¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love." Ephesians 4:11–16 (ESV)

During Paul’s ministry in Ephesus we see his commitment to equip the newly won saints for the work of ministry.

"But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus." Acts 19:9 (ESV)

At Big Valley Grace Community Church equipping the saints for the work of ministry begins with our Core Values of Total Worship, Neighborly Service, Endless Reach, Connected Fellowship, and Continuous Growth.

NEXT STEP :: *Share your story of how grace is transforming you to equip for Jesus Christ.*

REFLECT

What did you hear? _____

What do you think? _____

What will you do? _____

Now talk with God... _____

DAY 31 — EQUIP

Equipping The Saints

Ephesians 4:11-16

We are ALL the saints, doing the work of ministry! Every single believer has a role in the work of ministry—how exciting! Therefore, being a part of the Church body is so important—we are all needed, we need to encourage and support one another, and grow as we equip one another!

There is so much detail in the passage “every supporting ligament...” We think of the eyes, the hands, the feet, but our God is in the details...even down to the ligaments. The foot could not move properly without the support, the flexibility, the strength of the ligament. And the body needs every individual part to be working properly! So, if a sister is in a struggle, she needs to be supported and helped through because we impact one another. If a brother or sister in Christ is in need, we owe it to our body to lift him up! We are maturing and growing well when we grow together.

A bunch of years ago I broke a toe. Actually, it was deeper in my foot. After wearing flip flops for a year and a half, dealing with a broken toe even while pregnant, I finally had the surgery to fix the tiny little cracked bone. Post-surgery, they were kind enough to give me a new fashionable boot! After walking on that for a bit, my opposite hip started hurting—one tiny part of the body was injured, and somewhere else in the body, something seemingly unrelated was hurting.

This is the picture of us—the Church, the saints. I am so thankful we are not alone. Let us lean into the beautiful life of the body of Christ, and we will bring strength, support, joy, and maturity as we walk together.

NEXT STEP :: *Father in heaven, thank You for rescuing me and placing me in your Body. Lord, help me to be an encouragement to someone today, so that my life might bear kingdom fruit for You!*

REFLECT

What did you hear? _____

What do you think? _____

What will you do? _____

Now talk with God... _____

DAY 32 — EQUIP

Equipped With His Love

Ephesians 3:17-19

“...to know the love of Christ.”

One day in Israel, a Jewish lawyer came to Jesus and asked Him, “What is the greatest commandment?” How would you answer this? Without hesitation, Jesus’ answer was...love. Then to end with a mic drop, Jesus tells the lawyer that the entire Bible can be summed up in one word—love.

In Ephesians 3, Paul is writing to those that are already followers of Jesus. This is important because as we read his prayer in verses 14-21, Paul prays that the Ephesian church would “know the love of Christ that surpasses all knowledge” and “be filled with all the fullness of God”. Doesn’t this seem like something you would pray for a nonbeliever? Why would Paul be praying for believers to know the love of Christ?

In short, Paul recognized what Jesus had already taught. The narrative of the Bible is about love. The kind of love that characterizes God Himself in Exodus 34: abounding in steadfast love. It was love that brought Jesus to earth to save the world, it is love that brings us to salvation, and it is love that sanctifies and equips us to become more like Jesus. If we are not becoming more loving, then it is worth asking if we are fooling ourselves into thinking we are becoming more like Christ.

Have you ever noticed that the more you understand God’s love for you and others, the easier it is to forgive, show grace, and ultimately love those around you? That is no coincidence. That is how it is supposed to be. We are equipped every day when we abide in the love of Jesus and radiate that love to those around us.

NEXT STEP :: *God, thank You for the transforming grace that You have extended to me. Use that grace and love to transform me to be more like Jesus today.*

REFLECT

What did you hear? _____

What do you think? _____

What will you do? _____

Now talk with God... _____

DAY 33 – EQUIP

Sheep In The Midst Of Wolves

Matthew 10:1-23

It had to be special when Jesus called His disciples around Him and gave them authority over unclean spirits and the ability to heal every kind of disease and sickness (Matthew 10:1). Who would not want those gifts and authority? But how sobering it must have been for them to hear that regardless of these gifts, persecution and disfavor would surely come. As people would treat Jesus, so would they, as His disciples, be treated (Matthew 10:22).

There was a reason the Good Shepherd was sending His sheep into the arena of wolves! It was for the purpose that the transformed life in Christ would be a testimony to the Gentiles and others who would witness their life (Matthew 10:18-19).

Our Good Shepherd is still in the business of sending out His sheep (followers) to threatening and dark places. Jesus has a purpose for our lives in our places of employment, our neighborhoods, even our outside hobbies and activities. All these things are for far more than our good pleasure, but so that we might encounter the world that so desperately needs Him! It is not us, in and of ourselves, but He who is at work in and through our lives when we live in humble obedience and demonstrate the love of Christ, even to our enemies (Matthew 5:43-48). Even our sickness and diseases are not without His kingdom purposes!

Our lives, in the Lord's hands, are always meant for something far bigger than ourselves. They are meant to be a display of God's grace, mercy, and power!

NEXT STEP :: *Heavenly Father, take my life and let it be, consecrated, Lord for Thee. Take my moments, my days, my will, my heart, and make these things to be Thine own. Take myself and I will be, ever only, all for Thee!*

REFLECT

What did you hear? _____

What do you think? _____

What will you do? _____

Now talk with God... _____

DAY 34 — EQUIP

Jesus Prepares Us To Share The Good News

Luke 10:1-12

In this passage Jesus sends out 72 other disciples to go ahead of Him into the towns where He was about to go. In verse 2 we learn, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.” Jesus gives the 72 instructions on how to prepare the way prior to His coming into those cities. We can learn a lot from his teaching!

We need to be prepared in our communities, in our workplace, in our gym, and grocery store to share the gospel and to prepare for His coming! We are the laborers Jesus mentioned in verse 2, and we have a job to do! We are critical to the work that Jesus has prior to His coming; and He has given us a great blueprint to follow in that work.

As was modeled with the 72, we cannot go at it alone! Jesus sent this group in pairs so that they had a helper with them. Pray for Jesus to provide you with another Christian who can help you in sharing the good news in your community. It’s not going to be easy, and you are going to need to be vulnerable and depend on Jesus in a way that may not be comfortable.

Jesus told the 72 that He was “sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.” I cannot speak for you, but that sure seems like an uncomfortable situation to me! However, there is an amazing thing that happens when we step out of our comfort zone into where Jesus wants us to be. In the case of the 72, they had the opportunity to heal the sick and proclaim that the “Kingdom of God has come near to you!” What an amazing thing!

NEXT STEP :: *Father in Heaven, give me the courage to share the good news of Jesus. Father, provide me a partner in sharing the good news!*

REFLECT

What did you hear? _____

What do you think? _____

What will you do? _____

Now talk with God... _____

DAY 35 – EQUIP

Seeing What God Sees In Others

Acts 9:26-30; 11; 13:1-3; 15:36-41

Colossians 4:10 / 2 Timothy 4:11

Did someone see more potential in you than others did? My fourth-grade teacher at Hart-Ransom School was that for me. Now 40 years later, I am encouraged that she believed in me.

In the early church, Joseph from Cyprus, saw potential in people that others didn't see. In Acts 9:26-30 the apostles didn't believe the church persecutor, Saul, has truly become a believer, but Joseph took time to hear Saul's story about what happened in Damascus, and he took the risk to bring him to the disciples.

In Acts 11, the apostles sent Joseph to Antioch to see if this Gentile church was the real deal. He saw God working among them, so he decided to invest time in them. Be he didn't do it alone; he went to find Saul to help him and to give him a place to serve.

Led by the Holy Spirit, the Antioch church sent these two out as the first missionaries in Acts 13. But when Joseph wanted to take John Mark on a later missionary trip in Acts 15, Saul (now Paul) was against it because John Mark had left them on that first mission. But Joseph saw potential in John Mark, just as he had seen it in Saul years before and he stood by him.

Many years later, Paul wrote about Mark's help to him (Colossians 4:10, 2 Timothy 4:11). But it was Joseph who first saw potential in John Mark...and in Saul/Paul. No wonder the nickname the apostles gave Joseph was "Son of Encouragement," the name we best know him by is "Barnabas" (Acts 4:36).

NEXT STEP :: *Each of us can raise up others in the faith by encouraging them, giving them ministry opportunities, advocating for them, so they can fulfill the purposes God has for them.*

REFLECT

What did you hear? _____

What do you think? _____

What will you do? _____

Now talk with God... _____
