



ontrack devotions

1 THESSALONIANS  
- PHILEMON

MARCH 2024

# MONTHLY PRAYER SHEET

"...The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." James 5:16

Who I Will Reach

How I Will Do It

How It Went

Other Requests

Date Answered

How It Was Answered

# MONTHLY COMMITMENT SHEET

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

This sheet is designed to help you make personal commitments each month that will **help you grow in your walk with God**. Fill it out by determining

1. What will push you
2. What you think you can achieve

If you need help filling out your commitments, seek out someone you trust who can help you. Share your commitments with those who will help keep you accountable.

## **Personal Devotions:**

How did I do with my commitment last month? \_\_\_\_\_

I will commit to read the OnTrack Bible passage and devotional thought \_\_\_\_\_ day(s) each week this month.

## **Church Attendance:**

How did I do last month with my attendance? \_\_\_\_\_

I will attend church \_\_\_\_\_ time(s) this month.

I will attend small group \_\_\_\_\_ time(s) this month.

I will attend \_\_\_\_\_ time(s) this month.

(List any other activities you will participate in this month—Bible study, church events, etc.)

## **Bible Memory:**

How did I do with Bible memory last month? \_\_\_\_\_

I will memorize \_\_\_\_\_ verse(s) this month.

## **Outreach:**

How did I do last month with sharing Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

I will share Jesus with \_\_\_\_\_ this month.

I will serve my local church this month by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How do you know if true change has taken place in the life of someone? How can you tell if it is really a work of God? Paul helps us answer these questions in today's reading. He begins this book with the realization that this church responded to the power of the Holy Spirit, not to his words. He knows they are truly saved because he saw four characteristics in their lives. First, he saw that they were becoming imitators of Jesus and were people who walked with God. Second, they received the Word of God with joy and excitement. They wanted to attend church to learn what the Bible teaches. Third, their faith had become obvious to others due to the change in their lives. Fourth, they had given up their former way of life and began serving God. Paul used their daily lives as a measuring stick to determine whether or not they had turned to the true God. What changes have taken place in your life that demonstrate to others that God has worked? Do you see the characteristics Paul describes? How can you develop them to an even greater degree?

**SAY WHAT?**

In what ways do you imitate Jesus?

**SO WHAT?**

What attitude do you display toward the Word of God when you read or hear it?

**NOW WHAT?**

What comments would people make regarding your character?

**THEN WHAT?**

If you follow Jesus, how has your life changed?

**EXTRA READING**

1 THESSALONIANS 1



Why was Paul's ministry so successful? What can we learn from him in this passage that will ensure success in our ministries? There are some important reasons why Paul did not fail in spite of incredible obstacles. When we apply these to our lives, we will also yield fruit. First, Paul had the right motives (vs3-6). He was not performing to please people. He was serving God because he wanted to please the God who had given him a message to proclaim. Second, he used the right method (vs7-9). He not only worked at communicating the truth of God's Word, but he had also opened up his life to those he was teaching. He didn't just preach to them, he got involved in their lives and they were involved in his. Third, he had the right message (vs10-12). He taught them to live lives worthy of God. At times, his message was to encourage, comfort, or urge, but always to enable them to walk worthy before God. How successful are you at influencing your world for Jesus? Take some time today to examine yourself in these three areas. What is your motive, method, and message? In what ways do you need to change?

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 THESSALONIANS 2

The book of Proverbs was designed to help us in "attaining wisdom and discipline; in understanding words of insight; in acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; in giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young." As you read through this chapter, write down the verses that are most significant to you in your present circumstances.

VERSE | WHAT TRUTH IT COMMUNICATES | HOW IT IMPACTS MY LIFE

---

On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your love for people? If 10 was a perfect Christlike love for people and 1 was no love for people at all, where would you place yourself? How does your rating compare to the love Paul demonstrated in today's passage? He told the Thessalonians that he longed to see them and be with them. When he was apart from them, he missed them. Do you love people in this way? He wanted to encourage them in their faith. His desire was to help them move forward in their relationship with God. Do you love people this way? He continually thought about them and was concerned that they might be tempted and led astray. He was filled with a desire to keep them from falling. Do you have this kind of concern for the people in your world? When he heard about their growth and how faithful they were in their relationship with God, he rejoiced. To know that they were growing gave him joy even in the midst of personal difficulty. Often, we live day to day only concerned about ourselves and not others. Look at Paul's example and compare it to your life. What conclusions do you come to?

**SAY WHAT?**

In what ways do you demonstrate this kind of love for people?

**SO WHAT?**

In what ways can you improve your love for people?

**NOW WHAT?**

What steps can you take to begin improving in this area?

**THEN WHAT?**

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 THESSALONIANS 3

How do you feel about where you are spiritually right now? What words would you use to describe your relationship with God? Have you seen growth over the past few months? In what specific areas have you seen it? Today, Paul reminds us of the need to keep growing in our relationship with God and not be satisfied with where we are. In verse 1, Paul wrote that he knew the Thessalonians were living a life that pleased God. Keep in mind that this wasn't their opinion of themselves, it was the Apostle Paul's opinion. We can assume from this that their lives did please God. Notice though, what he wrote next. He told them to continue more and more. Even though they were living godly lives, Paul encouraged them to keep working at it. Likewise, you should not be satisfied with where you are at, but should continue to grow. It is necessary that we all examine our lives and improve in areas that are lacking. There is always room to improve.

### SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

### SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

### NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

### THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

### EXTRA READING

1 THESSALONIANS 4



What facts about the rapture of the church does this section of Scripture teach us? If we look closely, we are given several. First, we are assured that since Jesus has risen from the dead, those who have died in Him will also rise (vs14-15). People who have trusted Jesus before death will be raised again when He returns at the rapture. Second, we learn the sequence of the events (vs16-17). Jesus will come down from heaven with a shout and with the trumpet call of God. Then, those who were saved before they died will rise from their graves, and those who are saved and living will meet them and together go up to meet the Lord in the air. Third, we learn that after the rapture, we will never again be separated from Jesus (vs17). Fourth, we learn that the dates and times of His coming are not known by any man. And lastly, we learn that, since we do not know when the rapture will take place, we need to be ready for it to come at any time. Are you? If Jesus comes today, will the people you love be ready? There is an eternal price to pay for those who aren't.

### SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

### SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

### NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

### THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING  
1 THESSALONIANS 4

Of all the final instructions in today's reading, which one affects you the most? Which one is the most difficult for you to obey? How about being joyful ALWAYS and giving thanks in ALL circumstances? Paul gave the Thessalonians (and us) a command that is extremely difficult to obey. One of the most common reasons for not obeying that command is that we do not often see our circumstances the way God sees them. We often forget that God is in control and has an important purpose for what He does through our circumstances. He may be preparing us for something in the future. He may be giving us an opportunity to grow in an area of blindness. He may be providing us an opportunity to demonstrate to our world the difference He makes in our lives. When we rejoice and are joyful, we show that we believe what God has said. Are you facing a difficult circumstance that is robbing you of joy? What circumstances do you find yourself facing that make it hard to give thanks? What might God be trying to accomplish through them?

**SAY WHAT?**

Is there a situation that is robbing you of joy and thanksgiving?

**SO WHAT?**

List a few reasons that you can give thanks in the midst of it.

**NOW WHAT?**

What can you do to make it easier to follow God's expectations in this area?

**THEN WHAT?**

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

**EXTRA READING**

1 THESSALONIANS 5



If your friends were to talk about your life, what would they say? Would hearing what they say encourage or discourage you? Could they say what Paul said about the Thessalonians in this first chapter? Paul first mentioned that he had noticed their faith was growing more and more. Is your faith stronger today than it was 6 months ago? Paul could see that their love for each other was also growing. Can you point to signs that show your love for others has grown? Finally, Paul said that they were demonstrating perseverance and faith in the midst of persecution and trials. They hung in there and did not give up even when the going got tough. As you look back over the past few months, do you think this could be said about you? Have you demonstrated perseverance and faith in the midst of persecution and trials? Is your faith and your love for others the same as it was 6 months ago? Are you strong enough to persevere in hard times? What needs to change so you can experience more growth?

**SAY WHAT?**

What part of your life demonstrates that your faith is growing?

**SO WHAT?**

What qualities demonstrate that your love for others is growing?

**NOW WHAT?**

What in your life demonstrates that you have perseverance and faith in persecution and trials?

**THEN WHAT?**

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

**EXTRA READING**  
2 THESSALONIANS 1

If you heard the Gospel, rejected it, and therefore missed the rapture, is it possible to be saved during the Tribulation? Today's reading gives us helpful information to answer this question. First, Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit will be taken away during the Tribulation. His influence of holding back sin will no longer be a part of this world (vs7). Second, we learn that during the Tribulation Satan will perform counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders in an effort to deceive people (vs9). These efforts will cause people to believe that he, not Jesus Christ, is the Messiah. Third, we learn that God allows a powerful delusion to deceive people so that they believe the lie (vs11). Whatever Satan will tell them about the events going on at this time they will believe. God will allow people who have rejected Jesus to believe the lie of Satan. They will be condemned and will not become believers. This passage would seem to indicate that those who have rejected Jesus before the rapture will not accept Him during the Tribulation. To reject Jesus is a very serious decision. Have you rejected Jesus? What is causing you to reject Him? Who do you need to talk to about this?

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
2 THESSALONIANS 2



## PROVERBS 2

The book of Proverbs was designed to help us in “attaining wisdom and discipline; in understanding words of insight; in acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; in giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young.” As you read through this chapter, write down the verses that are most significant to you in your present circumstances.

VERSE | WHAT TRUTH IT COMMUNICATES | HOW IT IMPACTS MY LIFE

---

Why did Paul speak so strongly about idleness in today's reading? How are we to respond to idle people? The word translated here is a military term which means "out of rank." In the context of this passage, Paul was referring to the specific behavior of not working for a living. It means being lazy or unwilling to work. Paul knew that, as a believer, he should be the hardest of workers. He knew that being lazy and unwilling to work hard indicated a serious spiritual problem. We often see teens and adults today who are unwilling to work hard for anything. People can be lazy and seem to work harder getting out of work than they would by just doing the job. Idleness characterizes every area from athletics and academics, to employment and helping out at home. God expects His followers to be the hardest of workers, not idlers. To be idle is to sin against God. How do you measure up to God's standard? Make an honest evaluation.

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
2 THESSALONIANS 3

Where does a heart of love come from? If you want to have a heart of love, what should you do? You could turn to today's reading and find out. This passage helps us examine ourselves to tell if our love is what it ought to be. In verse 5, Paul says that love comes from having a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith. First, a pure heart is one that is without sin and is wholly devoted to Jesus. Is your heart pure? If you have sin in your life, or if other things are more important than God, you can't love as you should. Second, Paul says that love comes from a good conscience. It is a conscience that works correctly. It does not bother you because your relationships are right and your sin is confessed. If your conscience is not good, you cannot have love. Third, Paul says that love comes from a sincere faith. It is a faith that has no hypocrisy. If you live a hypocritical life, you cannot love. How are you doing in these three areas? You can't have a heart of love without being successful in these areas. Use today's questions to examine your life and determine if you have real love.

**SAY WHAT?**

Is your heart pure? What changes are necessary for you to have greater love?

**SO WHAT?**

Is your conscience good? What changes are necessary for you to have greater love?

**NOW WHAT?**

Is your faith sincere? What changes are necessary for you to have greater love?

**THEN WHAT?**

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 TIMOTHY 1

Can you and I guarantee that we will fulfill the purpose God has for our lives? Is there a way to know for sure that we will not ruin our lives or fail to accomplish what God has for us? The answer is yes according to today's reading. Paul gave Timothy two instructions that would enable him to fulfill the prophecies made about him. First, Timothy had to hold on to faith. That is, he needed to remain loyal and committed to the revealed truth of God found in the Scriptures. Unlike those who had fallen away, Timothy was instructed to remain devoted to the Scriptures. He had to study, guard, defend, know, and apply it to his life. Second, if Timothy was going to stay the course, he had to hold on to a good conscience. That was only possible if he lived a pure life. If he allowed sin to enter his heart, he would fall away and fail to fulfill God's call on his life. Though it is by no means easy, staying true in our relationship with God is simple. We must stay true to the Word. We must know it, follow it and share it. We must maintain a good conscience. We cannot tolerate any sin in our lives. Making sure you are faithful to your daily Bible reading is one way to make sure these two things are true in your life!

### SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

### SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

### NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

### THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

### EXTRA READING

1 TIMOTHY 1



How often do you pray for the unsaved? How often does your church pray for unsaved people? When we understand this chapter, we will understand the expectations on our prayer lives, individually and corporately. In today's reading, Paul makes it clear that we as followers of Jesus ought to make prayer for the unsaved a very high priority. Paul used the words "first of all" in verse 1 to indicate this. He gave several reasons in this section to pray for the unsaved. First, praying for the unsaved is the right thing to do. Second, God desires for all to come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. Third, we should pray for the unsaved because it is consistent with what God has called us to do. The reason we are still here on the earth is to be able to reach the world with the message of Jesus. There is only one way to receive salvation, and it is our responsibility to share this message. It is clear from this passage that we, as individuals and as specific groups of believers, ought to be praying for the unsaved. If you are not praying like this, why not begin now? Ask God to give you a burden for the lost and a desire to share.

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 TIMOTHY 2

What do we learn about pastors in today's reading? There is much beyond the specific list of qualifications. First, we learn that it is a very important calling. It is not something to be entered into lightly. Second, we learn that it is a limited calling. Becoming a pastor is not for everyone. It is limited in that it is not for women or for all men. Only a select few are qualified. Third, we learn it is a compelling calling. It is a calling that comes from God and results in an inner passion of the one called. Fourth, it is a responsible calling. It comes with great responsibility and a very high standard. Fifth, it is an honorable calling. It is the highest quality and the most important work someone could do. Finally, it is a demanding calling. It takes a lot of effort and some plain, hard work. It is not something you can do half-heartedly. It is no wonder Paul lists the character qualities required for a man called to be a pastor. The position of a pastor is to be taken very seriously and is not for everyone. It is for those whom God has chosen. Could God be calling you or someone you know into full-time ministry as a pastor? How will you know?

### SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

### SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

### NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

### THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

### EXTRA READING

1 TIMOTHY 3

How could someone neglect their gift? What would someone have to do in order for this to be true of them? It must have been an important issue because Paul included this admonition in his charge to Timothy in this chapter. Timothy was told many things that are obviously important. But why did Paul mention neglecting his gift? He knew that even someone like Timothy could fall into the trap of neglecting the gifts God had given him. How? He could neglect them by not using them. He could try to do things only utilizing the human strength God had given him. He could even overlook his gifts by being distracted into doing something other than what God wanted. Timothy could neglect them by falling into sin, and then not be able to use them as God had intended. He could neglect his gifts by desiring a different one. He could neglect his gifts by determining to minister in his own way, not the way God intended. Neglecting his gifts would hinder or even kill his ministry. Could you be neglecting the gifts God has given to you in any of these ways? What gifts has God given you? How are you using them? Is it the way God intends for you to use them?

**SAY WHAT?**

What gifts do you think God has given to you?

**SO WHAT?**

When people talk about the way you influence their lives, what do they say?

**NOW WHAT?**

What can you do to make sure you do not neglect the gifts God has given to you?

**THEN WHAT?**

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 TIMOTHY 4

The book of Proverbs was designed to help us in "attaining wisdom and discipline; in understanding words of insight; in acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; in giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young." As you read through this chapter, write down the verses that are most significant to you in your present circumstances.

VERSE | WHAT TRUTH IT COMMUNICATES | HOW IT IMPACTS MY LIFE

---

As your parents get older, whose responsibility is it to care for them? The answer is found in today's reading, and it might surprise you. Paul, in today's reading, gives Timothy some very clear instruction regarding specific groups of people. In verse 3, he explains to Timothy that he, as a pastor, is to instruct family members to take care of their mother if she becomes widowed. Her children and grandchildren have the responsibility to care for their mother and grandmother if she has lost her husband. The reason for this responsibility is found in verse 4. It is a way of repaying her for the care she gave to her children while they were growing up. Paul makes it clear that when we leave home, we do not leave responsibilities to our parents behind. As our parents grow older, it becomes our responsibility to care for them as it was theirs to care for us when we were unable to care for ourselves. To neglect this responsibility is to disobey God. As you grow older, do not forget God's expectations when the time comes to care for your parents. It will be your opportunity to acknowledge the sacrifices they made and the times they were inconvenienced for you while under their care.

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 TIMOTHY 5

How do you respond to those in authority over you? What if that person is harsh or cruel? What if they make a decision that is unfair? What if they are a Christian? Paul tells us how we ought to answer those questions. He instructs Timothy to teach his flock that they should treat their masters as people who are worthy of full respect. The reason is so that God's name and the message of the Gospel would not be slandered. Those watching their lives would notice the difference and would form opinions about Jesus based on the actions of the believers. He also explains that those who have fellow believers as masters are not to treat them with less respect. It appears that the Ephesians felt that if their masters were believers, they did not have to give them the same respect as unbelievers. Paul corrects that thinking. He wants the believing masters to be treated better than unsaved masters. How do you respond to those who have authority over you who are unsaved? How do you respond to those who have authority over you who are saved? Look at your life to evaluate it and make the necessary changes.

### SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

### SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

### NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

### THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

### EXTRA READING

1 TIMOTHY 6

What is the most important priority in your life? If you could be anything, what would you choose to be? While most of us might say we would choose to be godly, the reality is that godliness is not the priority of most believers' lives. In this passage, Paul gives Timothy contrasting characteristics between those who choose making money a priority and those who choose godliness as their priority. Those who pursue money may acquire it, but they will also be filled with grief. They will find themselves in ruin and destruction (vs9-10). They may be very successful, but it will be success in areas that do not matter. Those who pursue godliness will find righteousness, contentment, love, faith, endurance, and gentleness. They may not appear to be successful in the world's eyes, but they are in what really matters. What are you pursuing? What is your goal in life? Is your goal to be successful in what really matters? What would God say your priorities are?

**SAY WHAT?**

What is your goal in life? How does it demonstrate itself?

**SO WHAT?**

How can you tell if materialism is part of your goal?

**NOW WHAT?**

How can you keep yourself from pursuing what does not matter?

**THEN WHAT?**

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

**EXTRA READING**  
1 TIMOTHY 6

In the book of 2 Timothy, Paul gives challenges to his spiritual son in the ministry, Timothy. Paul told Timothy what he must do to be successful in ministry. He began by challenging him to fan into flame his gifts. Paul wanted Timothy to realize how crucial it would be for him to keep his relationship with God and his ministry a priority. Paul knew that it would be easy to let things go for awhile and lose the intensity of the fire that used to be there. He knew that the daily grind is difficult and it is easy to slow down. Paul did not want to see that happen in Timothy's life. Why? According to verse 7, it is because God did not give us a spirit of timidity but of power, love, and self discipline. In others words, God has given us a spirit that keeps us moving forward and pressing on. Where are you in your relationship with God today? Do you need to be reminded to keep fanning the flame in your life and never let it die down, even for a moment? It takes determination, discipline, and God's strength.

### SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

### SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

### NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

### THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

### EXTRA READING

2 TIMOTHY 1



What was Paul intending to communicate by writing that soldiers do not get involved in civilian affairs? The answer will help us stay the course and prevent us from becoming sidetracked in the ministry God has given us. The first notable phrase in this section is found in verse 4, "no one serving as a soldier." The implication is that we are serving as soldiers and not home on leave, resting. Paul wants us to remember that we are in battle and can't take time off. We are at war and can't be preoccupied by relationships or achievements. We are serving as soldiers. We can't strive for good grades in order to pursue a career that may blind us to the ministry opportunities God gives to us. We are at war, and we must make sure that we do not get involved in things that divert our time, energy, and money from our tasks as soldiers. We must be able to give full attention to our service to God. What things have distracted you? How can you become a good soldier again? Remember, we are at war with a fierce enemy. Don't become distracted!

**SAY WHAT?**

What kind of distractions do you struggle with?

**SO WHAT?**

Why is it difficult to not become entangled in them?

**NOW WHAT?**

What steps can you take to avoid falling into apathy concerning the war?

**THEN WHAT?**

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

**EXTRA READING**  
2 TIMOTHY 2

What two things did Paul want to be said of Timothy as a workman? How can we be sure these two things will be said of us? The first characteristic Paul wanted Timothy to be known for was being a workman who did not need to be ashamed. Paul wanted Timothy to live a pure life so that he could hold his head high wherever he went. In order for Timothy to not be ashamed, he had to live a pure life. Are you a workman who is not ashamed? Is your life pure so that you are not ashamed in any place or with anyone? The second characteristic Paul wanted Timothy to be known for was being a workman who correctly handles the Word of Truth. In order for this to be true, he had to read the Word, study it to discover what it is teaching, and memorize it to be able to use it. Knowing God's Word had to be his priority. Are you a workman who can correctly handle the Word of Truth? Do you spend time learning how to use God's Word? In order for you to be known for these characteristics, what changes do you need to make? Is this a priority in your life or are you satisfied with the way things are?

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**

2 TIMOTHY 2



## PROVERBS 4

The book of Proverbs was designed to help us in “attaining wisdom and discipline; in understanding words of insight; in acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; in giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young.” As you read through this chapter, write down the verses that are most significant to you in your present circumstances.

VERSE | WHAT TRUTH IT COMMUNICATES | HOW IT IMPACTS MY LIFE

---

So often, when we read our Bibles, we read over phrases that are packed with great meaning and important truth. We can miss the significance of those small phrases. Today, there is a small phrase tucked away in this chapter that could change the way you view the Christian life. Did you notice it? Go back and read verse 12 again. Paul wanted Timothy to understand that he had been asked to endure suffering because of his faith. Paul reminded Timothy of the kinds of persecution he had experienced by the hands of the world. God's deliverance of Paul was to be an encouragement to Timothy to faithfully continue his ministry. Right in the middle of his charge, he said, "everyone who wants to live a godly life will be persecuted." This means that we, too, will suffer. Be prepared for it. It is a natural part of a relationship with God. It also means that, if we aren't facing persecution, we may not be living a godly life. How about you? Do you want to live a godly life, even if it means you will face persecution? Although it will come, God will always be with us. What does your level of persecution reveal?

### SAY WHAT?

What kinds of persecution could someone face if they were living a godly life?

### SO WHAT?

Why do you think those who want to live godly lives face persecution?

### NOW WHAT?

What needs to change in your life so that you will become more godly?

### THEN WHAT?

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

### EXTRA READING

2 TIMOTHY 3

Is it hard for you to forgive people for their mistakes? Do you hold grudges towards people who have hurt you? If you answered yes to either of those questions, you will find encouragement from today's reading. To fully understand this, we must take time to review. In the book of Acts, Paul and Barnabas had taken with them on their missionary journey, a young man named Mark (Acts 12:25). During the trip, Mark became discouraged and left the group to return home. A few years later, Paul and Barnabas were about to embark on another journey. Barnabas wanted to take Mark, but Paul refused. He felt that since Mark had previously failed, they shouldn't give him a second chance. So, Paul took Silas, and Barnabas left with Mark (Acts 15:36-41). We don't hear any more about it until Paul's final comments in today's reading. In verse 11, Paul asked Timothy to bring Mark because he had been helpful to Paul in ministry. Paul had forgiven him and valued his service. He didn't hold a grudge or stubbornly refuse to give him another chance. Do you need to forgive and restore the way Paul did? Could there be steps you need to take today?

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

**EXTRA READING**  
2 TIMOTHY 4

In today's reading, Paul gave Titus a list of requirements for anyone who is being considered for the position of an elder. Why are these requirements important? According to this passage, there are three reasons for this standard. The first reason Paul lists is found in verse 7. These men have been entrusted with God's work. What an elder (pastor) does is different from any other job a man can have. He is giving God's Word to people. He is involved in teaching it, studying it, using it to correct and rebuke, and he has to be credible. Second, we are told in verse 9 that these standards are important because they enable him to encourage others with the truth and refute those who are teaching or living in error. If his life is not what it ought to be, he loses his ability to do this. Third, these standards are vital because there are many rebellious people who teach error and are ruining households. A pastor must be the kind of man who can protect people from the evil intent of these kinds of people. The job of a pastor demands a standard above any other job one might have. Could God be calling you to such a position?

### SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

### SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

### NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

### THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

### EXTRA READING

TITUS 1

If you want to reach the people in your community for Jesus, how would you do it? What strategy would be best to see many in your community trust Jesus as their Savior? The most effective evangelism strategy is found in today's reading, and it has been working for over 2,000 years. Did you notice it? Paul told Titus that the most effective way to impact the lost is to have those who are saved growing and walking with God. If you examine each of the "so thats" in today's reading, you see that at the heart of Paul's instruction is evangelism. Paul wanted Titus to teach women the right things so that their lives would not malign the Word of God. Paul wanted Titus to teach young men the right things so that those who opposed them would have nothing to say. Slaves were given instructions on how to live so that their lives would make the teachings about Jesus attractive. You see, effective evangelism begins with godly people. If you have a church in which people are walking whole-heartedly with God, then you have a church that can be effective in evangelism. Is your church ready to reach out?

**SAY WHAT?**

How is the spiritual condition of your church impacting your community?

**SO WHAT?**

What needs to change to make your church more effective in evangelism?

**NOW WHAT?**

What can you do to see your life and your church help others come to know Jesus?

**THEN WHAT?**

In light of this passage, what personal commitment can you make?

**EXTRA READING**

TITUS 2

In this chapter, we see a wonderful description of salvation. It is a great follow-up to yesterday's reading. You need to be familiar with this section so that when you have an opportunity to share your faith, you can use it. Or, you might need a simple reminder today of what Jesus Christ has done in your life. Paul, in verse 3, describes what we were like before we trusted Jesus. Not very flattering, is it? In verses 4-6, he reminds Titus how we have been saved. Our salvation is the work of God in our lives, and not something we could do for ourselves. This happened so that we might have the hope of eternal life. And what should our response be to all of this? It should be to devote ourselves to doing good (vs8). Titus needed to stress these truths to people so they would not forget what had happened to them. When you stop to think of what Jesus has done for you, how can you do anything but devote yourself to doing good? Reread this section and ask yourself what good you are doing in response to what God has done for you. What impact is your life having on unsaved people? Understanding these truths will change your life and your view of the unsaved.

### SAY WHAT?

Observation: What do I see?

### SO WHAT?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

### NOW WHAT?

Application: How does it apply to me?

### THEN WHAT?

Implementation: What do I do?

### EXTRA READING

TITUS 3



Philemon is an excellent book on the issue of forgiveness. Paul gave us so much in this short book that will help us learn to forgive others. One of the areas he covers is our responsibility in forgiveness. First, we must be receptive (vs10-14). We must be willing to open ourselves up to the one who has offended us. If God has done a work in their heart and they seek forgiveness, we must be open to it. Second, we must be willing to restore them (vs15-16). If they are truly repentant, we must be willing to not just forgive them, but bring them back to effective ministry and a relationship with us. Third, we must be willing to see restitution take place (vs17-19). It may involve being willing to cancel the debt or allow the person to work off what they owe. We must be willing to allow the wrong to be made right. All of these steps were a part of our salvation the moment we trusted Jesus. God was open to our restoration to Him. He allowed us to become His children. He sent Jesus to this earth to pay the price for the debt we owed. Are you willing to do the same?

**SAY WHAT?**

Observation: What do I see?

**SO WHAT?**

Interpretation: What does it mean?

**NOW WHAT?**

Application: How does it apply to me?

**THEN WHAT?**

Implementation: What do I do?

EXTRA READING  
PHILEMON

The book of Proverbs was designed to help us in "attaining wisdom and discipline; in understanding words of insight; in acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; in giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young." As you read through this chapter, write down the verses that are most significant to you in your present circumstances.

VERSE | WHAT TRUTH IT COMMUNICATES | HOW IT IMPACTS MY LIFE

---



CHRISTIAN  
**GAP YEAR**  
ASSOCIATION

**Our fast-growing network of incredible  
faith-based gap year programs helps  
Christian young adults:**

**DISCOVER**  
your God-designed purpose and path.

**DEVELOP**  
essential life skills with a strong biblical worldview.

**DEPLOY**  
into your next steps with focus, passion, and confidence.

**[BESTCHRISTIANGAPYEAR.ORG](http://BESTCHRISTIANGAPYEAR.ORG)**

**\*Most programs offer college credit enrollment at substantial  
discounts to keep you on pace toward a degree!**

PURSUE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND A  
GODLY LIFE, ALONG WITH FAITH, LOVE,  
PERSEVERANCE, AND GENTLENESS.

**FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT** FOR THE  
TRUE FAITH. HOLD TIGHTLY TO THE  
ETERNAL LIFE TO WHICH GOD HAS  
CALLED YOU...

1 TIM. 6:11-12

[ontrackdevotions.com](https://ontrackdevotions.com)

  @ontrackdevos

