CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS

MAY23 2026

Scripture Story: 2 Timothy.
Commentary: *The Acts of the Apostles* (or *Unlikely Leaders*), chapters 46, 47.

a part, not apart



Photo by Tompaul Wheeler/Digital photocomposing by Truman

keytext

"Do your best to come to me quickly."

(2 Timothy 4:9, NIV)

flashlight

"The desire for love and sympathy is implanted in the heart by God Himself. Christ, in His hour of agony in Gethsemane, longed for the sympathy of His disciples. And Paul, though apparently indifferent to hardship and suffering, yearned for sympathy and companionship. The visit of Onesiphorus, testifying to his fidelity at a time of loneliness and desertion, brought gladness and cheer to one who had spent his life in service for others" (*The Acts of the Apostles,* p. 491).

what do you think?

According to various scientific researches, people who are actively involved in church tend to experience improved health and longevity.[1] Why do you think that is? Do a bit of reading up, and make a list of the top three possible reasons why being part of church community would lead to better health. Share your answers with your class.

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did you know?

The trials and anxieties that Paul had endured had preyed upon his physical powers. The infirmities of age were upon him. He felt that he was now doing his last work, and, as the time of his labor grew shorter, his efforts became more intense. There seemed to be no limit to his zeal. Resolute in purpose, prompt in action, strong in faith, he journeyed from church to church, in many lands, and sought by every means within his power to strengthen the hands of the believers, that they might do faithful work in winning souls to Jesus."—Ellen G. White, The *Acts of the Apostles,* p. 488.

INTO THE STORY

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

"So never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord. And don't be ashamed of me, either, even though I'm in prison for him. With the strength God gives you, be ready to suffer with me for the sake of the Good News. For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus. And now he has made all of this plain to us by the appearing of Christ Jesus, our Savior. He broke the power of death and illuminated the way to life and immortality through the Good News. And God chose me to be a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of this Good News.

"That is why I am suffering here in prison. But I am not ashamed of it, for I know the one in whom I trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until the day of his return.

"Hold on to the pattern of wholesome teaching you learned from me—a pattern shaped by the faith and love that you have in Christ Jesus. Through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within us, carefully guard the precious truth that has been entrusted to you.

"As you know, everyone from the province of Asia has deserted me—even Phygelus and Hermogenes.

"May the Lord show special kindness to Onesiphorus and all his family because he often visited and encouraged me. He was never ashamed of me because I was in chains. When he came to Rome, he searched everywhere until he found me. May the Lord show him special kindness on the day of Christ's return."

"Timothy, please come as soon as you can. Demas has deserted me because he loves the things of this life and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus has gone to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Bring Mark with you when you come, for he will be helpful to me in my ministry."

"But the Lord stood with me and gave me strength so that I might preach the Good News in its entirety for all the Gentiles to hear. And he rescued me from certain death. Yes, and the Lord will deliver me from every evil attack and will bring me safely into his heavenly Kingdom. All glory to God forever and ever! Amen. . . . Do your best to get here before winter."

(2 Timothy 1:7-18; 2 Timothy 4:9-11, 17-21, NLT)

OUT OF THE STORY

List the people mentioned in these passages. What does Paul say they have done or are to do? What actions helped Paul and what hurt him?

In 2 Timothy 1:7 Paul lists three characteristics of a Holy Spirit-filled life. In your own words, write them down. Now read Galatians 5:22, 23 and add to the list. How does this list supplement Romans 12:4, 5?

These passages speak of "wholesome teaching" that Paul taught. What are some examples of wholesome teaching that you've learned?

Paul writes: "But the Lord stood with me and gave me strength so that I might preach the Good News in its entirety for all the Gentiles to hear" (2 Timothy 4:17, NLT). Paul was lonely and nearing the end of his life, but he never forgot his life's goal: to help other people. What is your goal?

punch lines

"But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called 'Today,' so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness" **(Hebrews 3:13, NIV).**

"If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble" **(Ecclesiastes 4:10, NLT).**

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality" **(Romans 12:12, 13, NIV).**

"For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink" **(1 Corinthians 12:13, NIV).**

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" **(1 Thessalonians 5:11, NIV).**

further insight

"The work of many a burden bearer is not understood, his labors are not appreciated, until death lays him low. When others take up the burdens he has laid down, and meet the difficulties he encountered, they can understand how his faith and courage were tested. Often then the mistakes they were so quick to censure are lost sight of. Experience teaches them sympathy."

—Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing,* p. 484

connectingtolife

Sabbath

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

Read and respond to the ranking exercise in the *What Do You Think?* section of this week's lesson. It takes courage and humility to forge an authentic relationship. It means being honest and open about our own flaws and accepting and forgiving toward others.

What is one thing you can do today to cultivate a more honest and heartfelt relationship with another believer?

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How can the following character traits help me to have authentic relationships?

Power _____

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Love _____

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Self-discipline _____

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Sunday

Read Hebrews 3:13 and Romans 12:5.

Hebrews 3:13 and Romans 12:5 remind us that as a family of God, we have a responsibility to take care of one another, to be involved in one another's lives.

What does the level of your involvement in your church reveal about your commitment to God's family?

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Monday

Read 2 Timothy 4:9.

The *Key Text* to memorize this week contains the words of Paul urging Timothy to come (2 Timothy 4:9, 21). When you're apart from your friends and family, loneliness can set in.

Can you think of someone that you need to call? Is there someone you can write a letter of appreciation to? Is there somebody whom you can help to relieve of their loneliness?

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Tuesday

Read Galatians 6:2.

Read the quote from the *Flashlight* section of this week's lesson. In times of trouble and difficulties, our faith in God can sometimes falter. During those times, we need a trusted group of people who will have faith in God on our behalf and use that faith to pull us through those tough times.

What is one step your class or small group can take this week to fulfill Galatians 6:2?

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Wednesday

As you read the passages listed in the *Punch Lines* section of this week's lesson, which verse strikes you as particularly significant today? Why do you think this verse is especially relevant to you today?

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Thursday

Read Romans 12:18 and 2 Corinthians 5:18.

Because we are imperfect and have our own idiosyncrasies, it is not uncommon to experience conflict with others from time to time. Read Romans 12:18 and 2 Corinthians 5:18. Is there someone you need to heal a broken relationship with today? If so, how can you begin that healing process?

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Friday

Read Colossians 3:14.

There are many reasons to be disillusioned with the family of God: hypocrisy, legalism, pettiness, and many other reasons. It is only natural that we encounter bad behavior, because we are all sinners.

What are you doing, on a personal level, to protect the unity of the church and nurture an environment of Colossians 3:14?

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[1] www.godandscience.org/apologetics/religionhealth.html.

this week's reading*

The Acts of the Apostles (or *Unlikely Leaders*), chapters 46, 47.

**Unlikely Leaders* is a special adaptation of *The Acts of the Apostles*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.