

R12.2 October 2023 Blog The Laymen Ministry

"You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 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. Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus."
(2 Timothy 2:1-3)¹

It is a quiet, beautiful fall afternoon at Callaway Gardens. It is Saturday, October 21, 2023, and we are at the mid-point of the R12.2 Men's Leadership Conference at Callaway Gardens, Georgia. We are in an Old Testament study this year, "The Exodus, The Law & Wandering in the Wilderness." Callaway is a special place where memories of past conferences come flooding back, especially remembering (and treasuring) deep conversations about Jesus with the likes of Gayle Jackson and Walt Henrichsen. These two patriarchs have passed, but they didn't leave this side of eternity without faithfully pursuing other men to carry God's torch. The opportunity to fellowship with men who love and expound Christ during this annual gathering has been invaluable over the years, hence the key verse included above.

The purpose of this month's installment is simply to reflect on why we gather, the objective of this ministry; and to encourage similar forums where men can come together to explore God's Word and be equipped to become "good soldier[s] of Christ Jesus."

The mission of the conference is to teach laymen the Word of God, help other laymen gain experience in teaching the Word, and to support laymen in their own ministries. As Scripture clearly states (and both Gayle and Walt regularly taught us), all are in the ministry.² The only difference between the vocational Christian worker and the layman is how the ministry is funded.

¹ All scripture references in this blog are ESV unless otherwise noted.

² Matthew 28:19-20, Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 2:10, John 15:16 and many others. See also Day 3, Investing In People, in the daily devotional, *Thoughts From The Diary Of A Desperate Man*, by Walt Henrichsen.

The R12.2 Men's Leadership Conference is a forum rich in applications from both the Old and New Testaments. There are four foundational passages of Scripture that further summarize and support the conference's objective to be a:

1. **Reproducing Ministry** – “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 2:2)
2. **Transforming Ministry** – “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:1-2)
3. **Scripture-Based Ministry** – “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
4. **Discerning Ministry** – “Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.” (Acts 17:11)

It is a privilege and a labor of love to be involved in this ministry. May the Lord continue to use it as a vehicle to further His Kingdom, by the power of His Holy Spirit, in laymen like you. The recordings and documents associated with the 2023 Men's Leadership Conference will soon be posted on the R12.2 website (r122conference.org). We encourage you to listen and read, but more importantly personally invest time in God's Word and in people.