

Sharing a Legacy

HOW CAN WE SHARE OUR FAITH WITH THE NEXT GENERATION?

Focal Verses • 2 TIMOTHY 1:1-14

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will DISCOVER how our faith is often directly tied to or derived from our ancestors, DESIRE to pass our faith onto the next generation, and DECIDE to share our Christian heritage with the next generation.

In Focus

Alex got out of bed late Sunday morning. He stayed in bed as long as he could, because he didn't want to get ready for church.

"Why aren't you dressed, young man? It's Sunday, and we always go to church. Are you sick?"

"Dad, I'm tired of going to church Sunday after Sunday."

"Tired!" His father's eyes showed a little fire. "Why would you say something like that?"

Alex straightened himself on his bedside. "My point is this: I been going to church since I was 5 or 6 years old. I've heard something like 2,000 sermons, and I can't remember a single one of them. So I think we are wasting our time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving all those sermons."

His father's voice became a little stern. "Listen, son, your mother and I have been married for 25 years now. In that time, she has cooked over 25,000 meals. But just like the sermons you can't remember, I can't recall every course of even one of those meals. But I do know that each meal nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to get through my days. If your mother had not prepared those meals, I wouldn't be as healthy as I am. Likewise, if this family was not a church-going family and was not receiving the nourishment that the church offers, we would be spiritually sick today!"

Why is it important to pass the faith along from generation to generation?

SCAN FOR VIDEO



Keep in Mind

"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also"
(2 Timothy 1:5, KJV).

Focal Verses

KJV 2 Timothy 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded

that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

The People, Places, and Times

Timothy. He was a disciple of Jesus Christ and a co-laborer with the apostle Paul in the ministry. Timothy worked extensively with Paul, traveling and preaching the Gospel. Paul often refers to Timothy as his son in the faith (1 Timothy 1:2, 18; 2 Timothy 1:2). Timothy was the product of a mixed union. His mother was Jewish, and his father was a Gentile (Acts 16:1). However, it appears that at some point Timothy's mother became a Christian, and she ensured that her son was instructed in the Scriptures. Timothy, from the scriptural account, was faithful, loyal, and trustworthy. Paul entrusted him to instruct the saints in Thessalonica, Ephesus, and Corinth.

Background

2 Timothy is one of the pastoral epistles (letters) written by the apostle Paul (2 Tim 1:1). Paul uses this second letter to Timothy as an opportunity to encourage his young mentee in the Gospel. This letter was written during Paul's second imprisonment in Rome, shortly before his death. Paul's love for and trust in Timothy is evident in his correspondence, and he longs to see his son in the faith again. While this second epistle is predominantly a letter of encouragement, Paul does not neglect the opportunity to warn Timothy to be aware of false teachers and inaccurate doctrine.

At-A-Glance

1. Paul Expresses Love Toward Timothy (2 Timothy 1:1-4)
2. Paul Reminds Encourages Timothy (vv. 5-10)
3. Paul Charges Timothy (vv. 11-14)

In Depth

1. Paul Expresses Love Toward Timothy (2 Timothy 1:1-4)

Paul was imprisoned, and others who had once served faithfully had forsaken him. During this time, he was especially grateful to Timothy for his faithfulness to him and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul remembered Timothy in his prayers to the Lord, and his times of prayer reflected on Timothy and all they had experienced as co-laborers in the ministry. As Paul remembered Timothy's tears, he longed to see his son in the faith to experience the joy they shared together again.

Paul and Timothy are examples of how to build a Christian family and leave an eternal spiritual legacy. The apostle Paul took time with his student to encourage him in ministry, allowing Timothy to travel with him and experience the pain and joy of serving the Lord. Paul's work would not go unrewarded. Because this elder was willing to take time to pour himself into the next generation, Timothy was now equipped to continue the work that the apostle started. God showed righteousness toward Paul and remembered his labor of love toward the saints (Hebrews 6:10). He reminded Timothy that he was praying for him continuously because he knew firsthand the persecution of being an ambassador for Christ.

How can we show our love for those we mentor or have mentored us?

2. Paul Encourages Timothy (2 Timothy 1:5-10)

Paul took time to encourage Timothy in the faith. He reminded Timothy of the heritage of his faith and the source of his gift. Paul spoke of Timothy's faith as unfeigned, meaning that Timothy's faith was honest and sincere. Timothy did not have to be timid in his faith. He could find strength in knowing that the same faith that had sustained and equipped his ancestors was present in him to sustain and equip him also.

The faith within Timothy had been tried and proven over generations. So Paul admonished him to stir up the gift of God inside him and refrain from walking in fear. It seems as though Timothy had been discouraged by various events. It could have been the mission in Corinth, the rise of Gnosticism, or other false teachings in the church. Paul does not tell us the actual events that may have contributed to the young man's discouragement. Paul did not judge, belittle, or degrade him for becoming discouraged. On the contrary, he simply encouraged Timothy to rekindle the flame. Paul reminded the young pastor that the spirit of fear does not come from God. The Spirit of God is one of power, love, and a sound mind (v. 7, KJV). Fear comes to rob you of your power, your love, and your soundness of mind. The apostle John reminds us that there is no fear in love and that perfect love (that is, the love from God) removes fear (1 John 4:18). It is the love that we receive from God that enables us to overcome fear and to walk in the power, love, and sound mind that He provides for us. Timothy did not have to be ashamed of the trials and persecutions of serving Jesus Christ. Nonbelievers and false teachers would say that Christ's death on the Cross proved He was not the Messiah. So, they would work to shame those who served and followed Him. However, Paul encouraged Timothy not to be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ but to partake in His afflictions. It is an honor to share in Christ's afflictions. The

same power that raised Christ from the dead is at work in us (Romans 8:11). Paul reminded Timothy that the power of God had saved him and called him to do work in the ministry.

How does remembering our history and heritage give us strength for today?

3. Paul Charges Timothy (2 Timothy 1:11–14)

Paul reminded Timothy that he was not alone in his suffering. However, this was not because of anything he had done but simply because of the One he served, Jesus Christ. Paul was in prison because he was a Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ. This did not bring Paul shame. His hope was in Christ Jesus (Colossians 1:27), and he was confident and trusted that Christ would keep Timothy for his service. Our study of this passage ends with Paul admonishing Timothy to follow sound doctrine. Some of Paul's previous followers had succumbed to false teachers and erroneous doctrine (2 Timothy 1:15). However, Paul warned Timothy to not turn toward any teaching different from what he taught about Jesus Christ. However, Paul knew this could not be done on Timothy's own accord. It was only with the assistance of the Holy Spirit that Timothy could discern sound teachings and hold fast to the truth given to him by Paul.

How does the Holy Spirit help us to stay faithful?

Search the Scriptures

1. What does Paul tell Timothy to do with the gift that has been given to him by God (2 Timothy 1:6)?
2. What does the Holy Spirit give to those who follow after Him (v. 7)?
3. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of Timothy (v. 14)?

Discuss the Meaning

1. Why do you think Paul felt the need to remind Timothy of the heritage of his faith?
2. How do you honor parents, grandparents, elders, mentors, or predecessors in your life on holidays or other days?

Liberating Lesson

The themes of heritage and legacy are prevalent in Jewish culture and are often referred to in both the Old and New Testament writings. God is often called "the God of our forefathers" or "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Genealogy was not just a listing of kinsmen. Genealogy represents one's identity. The Children of Israel would find strength and encouragement as they read about the battles and struggles of their forefathers. In Jewish culture, the prevailing attitude was, "If it happened to my forefathers, it happened to me." A great sense of strength and pride comes from knowing one's heritage. Take time during to learn more about an African or African American ancestor who changed the course of history or made a positive contribution to society. Think about what things you can learn from them. Ask yourself about the legacy you are leaving for the next generation.

Application for Activation

Using the principles of today's lesson, think about your family or friends. If there are older Christians, ask them to share with you an example of a time when God showed them His care and provision. Then, write down 1 or 2 things from that conversation that remind you to preserve and trust God.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

Say It Correctly

Potentate. **PO**-ten-tate.

Aegean. uh-**GEE**-an.

Gnostic. **NOSS**-tic.

Daily Bible Readings

DAY 302

Acts 21:1-40

Psalm 130

DAY 303

Acts 22:1-30; 23:1-11

Psalm 131

DAY 304

Acts 23:12-35; 24:1-27

Psalm 132

DAY 305

Acts 25:1-27; 26:1-32

Psalm 133

DAY 306

Acts 27:1-44

Psalm 134

DAY 307

Acts 28:1-31

Psalm 135

DAY 308

Romans 1:1-32; 2:1-16

Psalm 136

Notes
