



Sermon Study Guide

Questions from the Brink: What Is Your Legacy
2 Timothy 2:1-13 – Sunday, September 29, 2013

**Study questions are in italics*

Introduction

- People hope to leave behind lots of things: financial security for their kids, a few acres of land. *But what do you hope to leave behind, what would you like your legacy to be?*
- Scripture calls us to think in terms of legacy, even if it doesn't use that exact word. When God revealed himself as the great "I AM," he told Moses that this name was "to be remembered throughout all generations" (Gen. 3:15). Psalm 89 begins, "I will sing of the steadfast love of the LORD, forever; with my mouth I will make known your love to all generations." When Mary realized she carried the Messiah, she cried out, "from now on all generations will call me blessed" (Luke 1:48).
- It's easy to live in the here and now. But we are to have a heart for the generations to come. *What does that look like in your life today?*
- Our passage is 2 Timothy 2:1-13. Paul is writing from Rome. He's on death row. The church has come under intense persecution. Some who once professed Christ have now abandoned him. They didn't endure to the end; they were not faithful men. And it's with this in mind that Paul raises the topic of a Christian legacy.

What is a Christian legacy?

- Verse 2 is the main imperative of this whole passage. Paul's chief concern is for Timothy to raise up elders in the church at Ephesus. He is to look for "faithful" men. *What does a "faithful" man look like in the church today? How does your church seek to raise up "faithful" men? What are the dangers of a church with only one, identifiable teacher?*
- Verse 2 can be applied to more than raising up elders. Every Christian is to think strategically about giving away the Christian faith—especially to others who are likely to give it away as well. A Christian legacy is a group of people more able to stand boldly for Christ because of your investment in their lives.

- *What are the implications of verse 2 for parents? Read Deuteronomy 6:4-6 carefully. What does this look like in your life? How do you need to grow in the area of teaching your kids "by the way"? If you are not a parent, what implications does this passage have for you?*
- The Great Commission is about giving the faith away (read Matthew 28:18-20). Jesus seems to be calling all of us to entrust his teaching to others. We are to give away the faith that we have received. A cul-de-sac is a street with no outlet. People like this hear the Word, but it doesn't go anywhere; they just listen, and learn. But traffic always moves on the highway. If you're a spiritual highway the Word of God is constantly flowing through you into the lives of others.
- *What are the dangers of being a spiritual cul-de-sac? Describe the spiritual investment made by others in your life. What can you do to move away from being a cul-de-sac and be more like a spiritual highway?*

What kind of person leaves a Christian legacy?

- The rest of 2 Timothy 2:1-13 is about this very question. Paul is describing the kind of person God uses to leave a Christian legacy. He gives three answers:
 - **First, someone who leaves a Christian legacy remembers the gospel.** Verse 8 is the final imperative. Timothy is told to "remember" because he is tempted to forget. When Paul says, "Remember Jesus," he means remember all that Jesus has done; remember the gospel. *If someone asked you, "What is the Gospel?" what would you say?*
 - **Second, someone who leaves a Christian legacy endures suffering.** Most of the verses in this passage are about suffering [vv. 3-6, 9, 10, 12]. What can we learn about suffering?
 1. We learn that suffering is an inevitable part of the Christian life. Verse 3: Paul does *not* say in verse 3, "Be willing to suffer" but simply, "share in suffering." *Do you realize that suffering is inevitable? Why or why not?*
 2. Suffering is found in the intense, obedient pursuit of the Lord's pleasure. Verses 3-6. Like a farmer, a Christian must labor for Christ with a determination and intensity that can be painful. Like an athlete, a Christian must follow the rules, even when it's hard. Like a soldier, a Christian must first please the Lord. Christians used to understand this better than we do today. Writing in 1644, a group of London pastors who knew what it was like to be persecuted for their faith put it this way: "All believers in the time of this life, are in a continual warfare, combat and opposition against sin, self, the world, and the Devil, and liable to all manner of afflictions,

tribulations, and persecutions, and so shall continue until Christ comes into His kingdom.”

3. Suffering is for the church. Verse 10: Paul is suffering for the “elect.” Paul probably would have been released if he agreed to deny Christ. But he wouldn’t. Paul would rather preach and die than be silent and live. The church grew because Paul prized preaching over comfort. *Who do you know that is suffering and yet praising God? How is his/her response an encouragement to you?*
 4. We all have to count the cost. Verse 7, “Think over what I say.” In other words: before you do anything else, think carefully about the fact that following Jesus is hard; you’ve got to count the cost. Being a Christian means obeying God when it’s hard. *What does enduring suffering have to do with leaving a Christian legacy?*
- **Someone who leaves a Christian embraces God’s grace.**
 - None of us are smart or tough enough to leave a Christian legacy. We need God’s grace. Verse 1: “You then, my child, be strengthened by the *grace* that is in Christ Jesus.” Grace is the undeserved, unmerited favor we receive from God through Christ’s work on the cross.
 - When we are tempted to give up; when we feel incapable, unimportant, unnoticed, unloved, and insignificant; when our hearts condemn us, when all we can see is our sin, and our shame, and our weakness; grace charges into the Great Hall of our soul like a knight in shining armor, and heralds good news: “God loves you. Christ died for you. Stand up and stand boldly for him.”
 - Verse 13, “if we are faithless, he remains faithful.” In other words, in our weakness and need, when we think there should be no hope for us because we have fallen so short, God remains faithful. The God who saved you, will keep you, and never let you go. That’s grace.
 - *Is it possible to think too much about God’s grace? How can a healthy view of grace help you invest in other people?*

Final Application

- *How do these verses most challenge you?*
- *What can you do, in the near future, to make an investment in another believer?*