

God hasn't given **us** timidity. This takes humility to admit that we are subject to the same fears and failings that the next generation faces.

We should remember what God has given us.

- Power-When have you sensed God's power enabling you to do more than you thought possible? Sharing those experiences encourage others to risk trusting God to empower them too.
- Love-We cannot pour out what you haven't refilled. What is the best way for you to experience God's love for you? As you fill up with His love, you will be able to extend that love to those young Christians who might feel unloved. Let God use you as a conduit of His love.
- Self-discipline. -The term for self-discipline (Gr. sōphronismos) can also be translated as sound mind. It implies calmness and moderation. God desires us to be bold but not brash. Fear and timidity can keep us from using the gifts God has given us. God calls each of us to rely on His power, His love, and His sound mind to overcome fear. When we trust Him rather than fear, we can step forward boldly and allow Him to use us fully through the gifts He has given.

Paul's epistle is not only instructions for Timothy, it also contains an example of how we too can pass our faith to the next generation.

WRAP-UP

God invites each of us to be part of passing our faith on to others. Paul's relationship with Timothy reminds us that this happens through love, prayer, sharing what God has done in our lives, and living in a way that points others toward Jesus. We may not always feel confident or equipped, but God has given us power, love, and a sound mind. As we trust Him and faithfully use the gifts He has given us, He can work through our lives to encourage others, strengthen their faith, and help them grow in their walk with Him.

MEMORY VERSE

6 This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

- 2 Timothy 1:1-7 NLT

Challenge –

Spend some time this week with someone from a younger generation and look for ways to encourage them in their calling.

Pass the Faith Awake – Week 4

INTRODUCTION

If you've attended New Life in person, you've probably noticed a significant range of generations represented here. We want to truly be a multi-generational congregation, and that takes effort. It is easier to gather with the same generation because you have so much in common. There is a potential for both generations to experience fear or feel rejected by the other. The older generation may be cynical of the younger, and the younger may express their rebellion against the older. But there is a biblical basis for gathering all generations together under the banner of Christ. Our faith in Jesus is what bonds us to one another. And so, in this study, we will examine how one generation passes on the faith to the next as we consider Paul's example to Timothy.

Ice Breaker

What is one thing that was passed down in your family – for instance, the appreciation of the arts, the joy of sports, a strong work ethic???

Key Passage

1 This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus. I have been sent out to tell others about the life he has promised through faith in Christ Jesus. 2 I am writing to Timothy, my dear son. May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord give you grace, mercy, and peace. 3 Timothy, I thank God for you--the God I serve with a clear conscience, just as my ancestors did. Night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. 4 I long to see you again, for I remember your tears as we parted. And I will be filled with joy when we are together again. 5 I remember your genuine faith, for you share the faith that first filled your grandmother Lois and your mother, Eunice. And I know that same faith continues strong in you. 6 This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. - 2 Timothy 1:1-7 NLT

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Discipling The Next Generation

At some point all of us will move from being "the next generation" to being "the older generation." As we find ourselves graduated to that category we are given a new set of responsibilities. In verse 1 of our key

passage Paul says he is sent to tell others about the promised life through faith in Jesus. His letter is directed to Timothy, who is far younger than Paul. Paul saw his relationship to Timothy as a spiritual father. He was actively engaged in passing the faith from one generation to the next.

2 I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old-- 3 things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us. 4 We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done.

- Psalm 78:2-4 NIV

Psalm 78 tells us one of the ways we can pass down our faith. What are some of the things you have heard from someone in an older generation that strengthened your faith? Perhaps stories of their healing, God's miraculous provision or a years-long prayer that was answered. Do you have a story of the Lord's power and working in your own life to encourage those younger than you?

Although it is good to share stories of faith, they might not always be received as we would like. Someone younger may think, "that was then, this is now", or "that applied to you but not to me".

1 Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

- 1 Corinthians 11:1 NIV

Paul demonstrates another means of passing on faith in 1 Cor 11:1, he leads by example. The way we live is an observable example of our faith. Paul encourages others to follow his example when he follows the example of Jesus. Of course, this means we need to follow Jesus's example before we expect others to follow our example.

What do you feel are some of the examples in your life that you would like the next generation to follow? Are there any younger believers who you might invite to join you in those practices? For instance, read and discuss the same devotional, attend a service or a study together, or serve together in an area of ministry.

2 To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. 3 I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. 4 Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. - 2 Timothy 1:2-4 NIV

Paul calls Timothy his dear son and says he longs to see him. By this we can tell that Paul has a deep affection for Timothy. All of us need to know

we are loved. This can be especially true of kids, teens and young adults who fear rejection and exclusion.

How do you typically express your love for a brother or sister in Christ? Can you think of a young adult, teen or child who needs to hear an expression of love? If God gives you an opportunity to do so, be ready to show and/or tell them you genuinely love them.

In verse 3 Paul says he constantly remembers Timothy in prayer. Even if you don't have direct contact with those who are younger than you, God hears your prayers as you lift them up.

Share the name and any specific needs for someone in "the next generation" that you and your group can pray for this week.

2. Fan the Flame

6 This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

- 2 Timothy 1:1-7 NLT

Paul also refers to the spiritual gift that God had given Timothy when Paul "laid hands on him". This practice was observed when the apostles baptized someone so they would receive the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts as well as for commissioning leaders and for healing the sick. When Paul laid hands on Timothy, the Holy Spirit imparted a spiritual gift which Paul is encouraging him to nurture.

The older generation can help younger Christians to recognize the ways God has gifted them. Is there a young person that you've seen demonstrate a spiritual gifting? Have you told them what you see God doing in their life?

We see from Paul's admonishment that Timothy had a responsibility to guard the deposit of faith he carried. But there would be challenges to doing that. Paul specifically notes God hasn't given us a spirit of fear and timidity, in contrast with what God has given us; power, love and self-discipline.

What might make Timothy feel fearful or timid? What can you do to help someone who is feeling fearful about stepping into God's calling?

Paul didn't tell Timothy "God hasn't given **you** a spirit of timidity, he says