

# Paul and Timothy: Passing the Torch

## The Secret to Leaving a Legacy

Rough Transcript

Brett Clemmer

### **Brett Clemmer:**

Well hey, good morning guys. It's great to be with you. We are in our second to last week in this series, Passing the Torch, a study of 2 Timothy, and we are in 2 Timothy 4. So go ahead and turn to that passage in the Bible. And how many of you can think of like a great speech in history? What's a great speech in history that you've heard? Gettysburg address, which was? Abraham Lincoln, right? Well how does that start? Well, hang on. "Four score and seven years ago." You said, "I have a dream." Who's that?

Martin Luther king, right? "I have a dream." Somebody said, you said Gettysburg Address. I love the Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address. He said that famous line, "With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right." There's these speeches that we get, that really say profound things. And then somebody else said, Winston Churchill. Who said, Winston Churchill?

That was Patrick Henry, "Give me liberty, or give me death." That was Patrick Henry.

No. Winston Churchill, he had a couple on the beaches and- Yeah. That one. But my favorite one is this. So he went to this private boarding school called, the Harrow School on the Northwest side of London. And he went back there and gave a speech to the boys that went to this boarding school and it was 1941. And he had been there about 10 months before and 10 months before it had been very, very dark. England was basically fighting Germany, practically by itself. Nobody would help them. Everyone wanted to just placate Hitler and just hopefully we can just sort of limit him. So they were desperate just 10 months before.

Then he comes back 10 months later to the Harrow School, and he said he came to be cheered up by singing the school songs. They would sing songs together and probably the equivalent of a Chapel service. And then he gave this speech and in the middle of the speech, he says these famous lines. He says, "Never give in. Never give in. Never, never, never, never." Except he said, "Never, never, never, never in nothing, great or small, large or petty. Never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense. Never yield to force. Never yield to the overwhelming might of the enemy." And then he went on to say, "A year ago we had no help. It's 10 months later, since the last time I was here and now countries are stepping up."

Now at this point, America wasn't in the war yet, but we had started giving England arms and material, so that they could fight Hitler, and then we would come in soon after this. So this, "Never give in, never give in." So as we're talking about this morning, the secret to leaving a legacy, I want you to keep this in mind, this famous quote by Winston Churchill to never give in. Now, of course, there's the Bible's full of memorable speeches, right? There's different people in the Bible. Jesus, the most, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." Is probably the most effectual speech in the history of mankind. Because of Jesus saying to a group of men on a hillside, "Go make disciples." We are here, because of that speech. I would say that's probably the most powerful speech in history given by a man, Jesus, the God man. But today we're going to look at a sort of a memorable line by Paul. When we get to it in this passage, you'll recognize, you'll be like, "Oh, I've heard that. I've heard that line before."

So let's look at 2 Timothy 4:1-8. This is the Word of the Lord. Paul says to Timothy, "I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, Who is to judge the living and the dead and by His appearing and by His kingdom, preach the word. Be ready in season and out of season. Reprove, rebuke and exhort with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when men will ..." Excuse me, "When people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry, for I am already being poured out as a drink offering. And the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight."

You recognize this? "I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me, a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will award to me on that day. And not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing."

Let's pray. Father, we are coming to the end of this letter from Paul to Timothy. We're seeing what Paul may have thought of as his last words to Timothy. And Lord, I pray that You would speak to us through these words that this great servant, who fought the good fight, who finished the race, who kept the faith, that we would learn from a man like this, a man that left his legacy of men like Timothy and Titus and so many others. And Father, would You speak to us this morning? Would You show us what these words mean, not just to Timothy, but to us as well as we studied them? So Father, we ask that You would enlighten our minds, Lord that You would stir our hearts, that You would encourage us on to live for You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

All right. So here's our outline for today. We're going to talk about the good fight. We're going use Paul's little phrase at the end. We're going to talk about the good fight, and then we're going to talk about the race and I'm going to tell you that the race is an obstacle course. It's not a flat course. It's an obstacle course. And then we're going to talk about the reward at the end of the race that Paul talks about. So let's start with talking about the good fight.

### **THE GOOD FIGHT**

So looking at this first verse, Paul says, "I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, Who is to judge the living and the dead and by His appearing and His kingdom." So let's just dissect this passage verse by verse. So he says, "I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus." So right away, Paul is just reminding Timothy over and over again, reminding us that this is in the ... This isn't just a theological statement. This is like, don't lose the in the presence of. I'm saying this in front of the Father, in front of Christ Jesus. Why does he say that? Because he's giving us almost accountability to these words that we're getting.

Then he says, "Who is to judge the living and the dead." So what does that mean? Let's turn over to 1 Thessalonians. It's just a couple books over. We'll turn over to 1 Thessalonians 4:16. So what does he mean, that God and Christ Jesus Who are going to come to judge the living and the dead? Well in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Paul says, "For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with the cry of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the sound of the trumpet of God and the dead in Christ will rise first." There's the dead. "Then we, who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord." So this is exactly what Paul's talking about. That Jesus is coming back. He's going to come back to judge the living and the dead. The dead will be raised first, then the living will be raised and we will all face judgment.

Now that might sound scary, but look at the next verse in 1 Thessalonians 4. He says, "Therefore, encourage one another with these words." Jesus is coming, right? So then, that's why this verse goes on to say, "And by His appearing and His kingdom." So this appearing is not the appearing that Jesus already did. Paul's talking about the appearing that is to come, the second coming of Jesus. So as you

think about how this letter has progressed and how Paul's not getting to the end of it, now what's he talking about? He's talking about things to come. So he says, "Jesus is coming back and He's going to usher in his kingdom."

Why is this a key question? This is a key question. Do you believe that He's coming back? I think we love to talk about the Gospel, but when we talk about the Gospel, a lot of times we talk about Jesus' time on earth and His death and resurrection. And then, we talk about his Ascension, but we don't talk about His coming back as much. But if He's not coming back, then what are we waiting for? What are we doing? Without Jesus coming back, without judgment at the end of time, it's just morality. It's just Confucius. It's just good ways to live and nice ways to treat each other. But if He's coming back, that's the cap of the thing, right? That's where it leads to. Eschatology matters. When you people use the word eschatology ... I love to study this stuff, but what I've learned is that theological people like to use complicated words to make normal people feel like they don't know anything, all right?

So eschatology, it's not complicated. It's just what happens at the end. That's all ... When you go, "What's your eschatological? Are you pre-millennial or post-millennial or amillennial?" Just say you're pre-millennial. You don't know when Jesus is coming back, but you're all for it, okay? Right. And there are different takes on this, all come to by good people with sound theological, understanding that none of us have, and none of them agree. So it's a mystery, that's part of the deal. But the thing that's not a mystery is that, Jesus is coming back. I guarantee it. If you don't think Jesus is coming back, then none of this really matters. It's just a morality play. So that's sort of my first big question for you today. Do you really believe He's coming back? And since you believe He's coming back, how does that change things?

Then in verse two, he gives Timothy this list, right? He says, "Preach the Word. Be ready in season and out of season. Reprove, rebuke and exhort with complete patience and teaching." So when you see a list like this in Paul's letters, the first thing in the list is like a summary of the list or is the basis for the rest of the list. So he's saying, "Preach the Word and in preaching the Word, do these things." Okay. So what is Timothy called to preach? Let's go over to 1 Timothy. Let's look at 1 Timothy 1: 15, just a couple pages over. Paul says this, "This saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of who I am the foremost."

This is what Paul wants Timothy to teach. Jesus came to save sinners. How many sinners in the room? Why is every hand not up? All right, I was writing. Put your hand up, right? You're a sinner. I'm a sinner. Jesus Christ came to save sinners. That's the basis of it all. So preach the Word. When? He says, "Be ready in season and out of season." This is sort of a little phrase, this is an interesting way to say this, "In season and out of season." So Timothy, when you're ready to preach the Word, preach the Word. When you're not ready to preach the Word, preach the Word. But it has a double meaning too. It's also when the people that you are talking to are ready to hear the Word, preach the word. When the people you're talking to, aren't ready to hear the Word, preach the word, right? So at all times, be preaching the Word. This is when, whether you feel like it or not, or whether the people that you hear feel like it or not.

Now, you look at what Peter said, "You're still going to do it with gentleness and respect." This isn't like, the Bible's not a blunt force instrument that you beat people over the head with, all right. It's the living Word but, "You got to be ready," he says. Be ready, because you don't really know when somebody else will be able to hear. Then how should he preach the word? Well, it says, "To reprove, rebuke and exhort." This is interesting. If you look at, "Reprove, rebuke and exhort." So reproving is correcting, okay. So this would be like false teaching. Correct people when they misunderstand the Gospel. Give them a proper understanding. So this has to do with your intellect.

Rebuke, rebuking is speaking to somebody's conscience. Like, "You don't think that's wrong? No, that's wrong." That's what rebuking is. So rebuking speaks to a man's conscious. And then exhorting, another way of saying exhorting is encourage. Exhorting is a better word than encourage, because encourage, you kind of get the sense of making somebody feel better. But what it really means is to instill courage.

How do you know if somebody has courage? They act courageously, right? So exhort has this, a little bit more of an idea of pushing somebody forward to do something. So it's looking at a person's will, right? So isn't this interesting? Paul, maybe he did this on purpose. Maybe just Paul's just so brilliant that these things come out of him this way, but reprove, rebuke can correct means speak to their minds, speak to their consciences, speak to their hearts, speak to their will, prompt them to write action. This is how you preach the Word. And then, but if you stop there, you could get some sort of, I don't know, not nice people, not fun people to be around. So he qualifies it. He says, "With complete patience and teaching." So now let's think about us as spiritual fathers, right? You've developed a relationship with a guy who's behind you on their journey of faith. You're interacting with them regularly. You're talking about real things and they say something that needs correction. So you say, "Well, you idiot, the Bible doesn't say that. What are you thinking?" Right. That's not helpful, right? "With patience and teaching." "Hey man, I know that's a common misconception about God helps those who help themselves. Well, you know that's a nice phrase, but it's actually not in the Bible anywhere. You know what it does say is that we should rely on him for our strength." You got to point guys back to the Bible. That's what we do when we correct. We don't correct out of a sense of moral superiority. We correct out of a sense of Scripture superiority. Go back to the Bible guys. You don't have to convince anybody of how they're supposed to act by your sound reasoning and excellent rhetoric. Go to the Bible. Just let the Bible be your guide. Do it with patience and teaching.

If you've got to rebuke somebody, if somebody's talking badly about maybe their wife, that woman and they say something disrespectful about their wife. You know, you got to say to them, "Hey man, that's not the right attitude to have towards your wife, that's not loving your wife. While the Bible tells us to love our wives, like Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her. How are you giving yourself up for your wife? Are you willing to die for her?" That's how you speak to a man's conscience, but you do it with patience and with teaching, with keeping referring to the Scripture.

When a guy's just sitting around doing nothing, he's been unemployed for a long time because he lost his job and he's feeling like garbage and he can't seem to get it in gear. You got to say, "Dude, you need to get off your butt. Let's go. Right? I mean, Paul said, "If you don't work, you don't eat. Come on, let's go. How can I help you? Get your resume out, I'll help you do your resume. Hey, you got your profile set up on LinkedIn?" We'll find another young guy, because you guys are too old to use LinkedIn. I'm kidding. We'll find somebody, we'll get Vlad to help us set up our LinkedIn profile, all right? That's engagement, when you're engaging with somebody, with patience and with teaching. You're not just telling them what to do. You're not just pointing the finger and shaking your finger. You're engaging, and this is what Paul is encouraging Timothy to do.

One commentator said, "Christian reproof without the grace of long-suffering has often led to a harsh, censorious attitude intensely harmful to the cause of Christ. To rebuke without instruction is to leave the root cause of error untouched." All right. So we are going to provide reproof. We're going to provide correction and rebuke and encouragement and exhortation, but we're going to do it with love. We're going to do it with grace and that's going to have an impact on the lives of people around you, all right?

All right, I'm going to skip to, because this part ... Now we're talking about the fight here, the good fight here. So, let's skip to verse five, because we're going to come back to the obstacle course and he says for this. So he says, "As for you, always be sober minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist and fulfill your ministry." And this passage made me think of 1 Corinthians 16. One of the passages that we actually teach a seminar on at Man In The Mirror is 1 Corinthians 16: 13-014, but we're going to look at verse 13 right now.

1 Corinthians 16:13 says, "Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men." Or in the NIV, it says, "Be men of courage, be strong." Right? And so look at this passage, he says, "Be sober minded." To be

vigilant, to be on your guard, you have to be sober minded. You have to be clearheaded. And so, if you're Timothy, if you're out there and you're angry all the time, or Timothy you're out there and you're literally not sober, you're inebriated you, you're being distracted by things, you're not sober minded. Sober minded is clear thinking. Be clear thinking, so that you can be vigilant. He says, "Endure suffering." Well, what does it take to endure suffering? Well, that's standing firm in the faith, like he says in 1 Corinthians 16. That's being a man of courage. You have to endure suffering. You have to have courage to endure suffering.

It's being strong, and actually, in 1 Corinthians 16:13, that phrase, "Be strong," because Greek and English don't always translate perfectly together, the tense of that verb is actually, be becoming strong. In other words, always be getting stronger. And so it's a constant effort on our part. So if you're going to endure suffering, you've got to stand firm in the faith. You've got to be a man of courage. You've got to be strong in getting stronger all the time. This is how you stand firm in the face of suffering. And then he says, "Do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry." And you're going, "Whew. This is the part that doesn't apply to me, because I'm not an evangelist." Right? You kind of are, all right. You kind of are.

1 Corinthians 12 says, "We are one body with many members and we each have a function." So certainly there are some people that are gifted at certain things more than others, but we all have a ministry. We all have something to fulfill. Let's go over to Ephesians 4: 11-12. Paul's talking about unity in the body of Christ and he says, "And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood to the measure of the stature and the fullness of Christ." So there are offices, right of apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, teacher to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. But guess what? If those people are equipping the saints, who's the saints? We are, we're the saints.

So if you have been ... And then if you've been equipped for the work of the ministry, you have to figure out what work or the ministry is. And so we talk about spiritual gifts, right. We talk about teaching and administration and hospitality and mercy. These are all different gifts that people can have. And so if you're going to fulfill your ministry, you need to know your gifts. If you're going to be investing in the life of a younger guy, you need to help him figure out his gifts. That's how you fulfill your ministry to him, is to help him figure those things out.

So here's the big question. What's your ministry? Paul tells Timothy, "Fulfill your ministry." I'm encouraging you fulfill your ministry. What's your ministry? What are you called to do? Now, I think a lot of guys and I've done this too, we say, "Well, what am I gifted to do?" No, no, no. What are you called to do? God will give you the gift. God will bring people around you to equip you. Don't use the fact that you don't know how to do something, be an excuse for not doing something. If you're called to do it, figure out how to do it. Find somebody else that does know.

If you feel like "Man, I have no idea. I really want to tell people about Jesus. I want to walk up to people and be able to share the Gospel with them. I have no idea how to do it." Well, if you go, "Well, I don't know how to do it, I guess I won't do it." Well, that's dumb, right? You have to go find somebody to teach you how to do it. Go along with somebody else that does it. And then once they taught you how to do it, then now you're equipped to tell somebody else how to do it and that's how the Church works. That's how life works. And so what is your ministry? How can you fulfill it? This is the good fight that Paul is talking about. These three verses really define the good fight.

## **AN OBSTACLE COURSE**

Let's look at the race itself, and the race is an obstacle course. It's not flat, right? It's got obstacles that you have to overcome and Paul describes some of these obstacles. Now here's an interesting thing. As we look at these verses, Paul is not talking about the world. He's talking about the Church, all right? This

is a little bit sobering, but Paul is talking to Timothy about his work inside the Church in Ephesus and these are the things that he says. He says, "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths." So what is he talking about here?

Let's look at just ... We're in 2 Timothy 4. Just go back to 2 Timothy 3 and we can see what he's talking about. He's just talked to Timothy about this. 2 Timothy 3:6-9, "For among them..." In the verses before he's like, "People will be lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." And then listen to this, "Having the appearance of godliness." So that whole list, that whole encouraging list of lousy things that people do, these are people who have the appearance of godliness, but denying the power of godliness. And what does Paul say? He says avoid such people. In this passage, he's going a little bit farther. He's saying, the time is coming when people won't endure sound teaching.

So there's this concept called, the visible Church and the invisible Church and I think Pat may have even mentioned this a week or two ago. So the idea is that there's the visible Church. Sometimes, I've heard this called the small sea Church. So the visible Church, that's the Church you go to. And you know that when you walk into your Church, there are people there that are saved and there are people there that are unsaved. There are regenerate people, people that the Holy Spirit has come and regenerated and there's people that have not been regenerated. The difficult part is when unsaved people think they're saved. And I'll tell you how you find that out, by the way.

It's pretty easy, you ask somebody how they know they're saved. And when they start talking about ... They're either going to talk about the work of Christ or they're going to talk about their own work. If they talk about their own work, they don't understand. And what do they need? Patience and teaching, right? But if they talk about Christ work, "Well how do you know you're saved?" "Well, I know I'm saved because Jesus died for me. I'm a sinner, unable to save myself, unholy, unqualified in the side of God. But Jesus saved me. Jesus died for my sins. Jesus paid the penalty. Jesus defeated death. Jesus went to heaven and Jesus is ..." What? Coming back, right?

When people talk about Jesus, that's how you know that they're most likely. I mean, we can't know a man's heart to be saved. If you're in a conversation with a younger guy and you say to him, "Hey man, tell me about your faith. Tell me about, how do you know that you're saved?" And he says, "Well you know, I really try to be good. I give money to the Church and I serve, I volunteer and I really try to make sure my kids behave correctly. And I have a lot of integrity at work and you know, I'm a pretty good guy." Well, they don't get it, right. But then Paul takes it to this next step, right? He says, "There are people who will not endure sound teaching, but have itching ears." Guys, there's wolves among the sheep, right? These people have itching ears and not enduring sound teaching.

So what are some examples of errors, some unsound teaching that we see today? Well, not step on toes, but put your boots on. Like the prosperity gospel, that's not sound teaching. Let me tell you why it's not sound teaching, because the prosperity gospel is about your performance. If you do the right things, if you have enough faith, if you can actually compel God to bless you, it's not the gospel, right. Does God bless people? Absolutely. Read Proverbs where he talked about wealth is a great thing, used correctly. This is not about rich and poor. This is about you thinking that you have any ability to impact the action of God. God acts because He's God. God saves you because He wants to save you, not because you convinced Him. Trust me, you couldn't convince Him. I couldn't convince Him, right.

So, the other side of the coin though is legalism, but it is the same coin, because legalists at their core are basically saying, "You better behave so that you can be saved." Well, it's just the same thing. It's

using my behavior to compel God to do something for me. It doesn't work that way. Those are the kinds of false teachings that you can see in the Church and there's other ones.

Itching ears, what does he mean by itching ears? Well, these are people that like novelty, okay. They need something to get them excited. They're like, "Church tradition's boring and I've heard this great thing that combines this really cool precept and Buddhism with this nice Hindu concept with progressive humanism. And I just think God really loves us and wants us to be happy." Itching ears is these people that are trying to find new ways to say things, things that aren't in the Bible. Or reinterpret things in the Bible in a way that it doesn't say that, but you twist it around and make it say the things that you want it to say.

You see this a lot frankly in Progressive Christianity. That's the whole point. That's what the word progressive means. It means always moving ahead, always coming up with new ways of doing things. But God is the same today, yesterday and forever. He doesn't change. The Bible doesn't change. And so if you've got itching ears or if you're around guys that have itching ears, you've got to help them come down to reject the cool and progressive and instead, accept the eternal truth of what's in the Bible.

He says, "They'll accumulate teachers to suit their passions." Right, I see this a lot with people who their focus is on themselves, on their feelings. Now I'm not playing like the man card here. I'm not like, "Oh your feelings." I'm not saying that at all. What I'm saying is there is a cultural movement to tell you that you have your own truth and I have my truth and what that's based on is how I feel. I feel like this is right. You feel like that's right. Let's be tolerant and we'll accept each other's feelings without any kind of moral framework for how that works. Well, that's like me saying, "I feel like driving on the left side of the road." Well go to England, because if you drive on the left side of the road here, you're going to kill somebody. If you rely on your feelings to help you determine what's right and what's wrong, you are going to hurt somebody. You're going to hurt yourself, but you're going to hurt somebody else. I guarantee it. Think about it. You've seen this. I've seen this.

I was going to read from this book, but I don't have time. But if you want to read a really good book about this whole concept of what we call expressive individualism, the idea that my individuality is the highest good, that how I feel is the highest good read this book, *Strange New World* by Carl Trueman. I don't get a royalty, but it's a fantastic book, just about this whole idea of how we've been shaped by the teachings of people like Marx and Nietzsche and Freud and Darwin. Without even ever having read those people, we've been influenced by, our culture's been influenced by their teaching, all right?

All right. By the way, he says, "Accumulate for themselves teachers to fit their own passions." Let me just say another quick note. If you're in Church and your pastor never says something that makes you feel uncomfortable, he may not be preaching the Gospel, because you're not that sanctified it. My father-in-law is a pastor. He says, "My job as a pastor is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." Right? So if you are never afflicted in Church, if you never hear something where you're like, "Oh man. Wow, I need to go repent of that one. Oh man, I never looked at it that way before. That's not a right view of God that I've been having." If you would never have a moment like that in Church, you're not here in the Gospel. I guarantee it. The Gospel is hard. It challenges our human thinking, all right.

Then he talks about how, "They'll turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths." I don't think I have to explain this too much, other than I want to tell you that, this word turn away, it's the word they use to wrench a joint out of socket, right? So they're lurching, they're lurching away from the Gospel. And then, what do they do? They wander off into myths. One commentator said, "People too often look for someone to soothe their itch rather than to satisfy their thirst."

## **THE REWARD**

All right, so let's get moving here. Let's talk about the reward. Let's talk about the reward. So this is the **Big Idea. How will you finish the race?** How will you finish this obstacle course? How will you finish the race? I've seen too many guys who've been movers, like mature Christian men in the Church, elders, deacons, Sunday School teachers, faithful volunteers, and then something happens. Like their kids leave, their career starts to wind down. They get a little tired, I think. Like they've been thinking, "I've been doing a lot in the Church for a long time. I've been an elder. I've taught small groups. I've worked in the Youth Group. I sang on the Worship Team. I worked in the tech. I've done a lot of different things in the Church for a long time." And frankly, your energy gets a little bit lower.

Then what you do is, as your career slows down and your parenting changes drastically, because your kids aren't there and things sort of die down, you have two choices to make. And what I see guys too often do is spiritually, they do the same thing. They take their foot off the gas. They sort of stagger into spiritual retirement. Don't do that, because as God puts you in a position where your kids get out of the way and your job doesn't require so much for you, you now have more margin than you've ever had before. You're not supposed to take your foot off the gas spiritually. You're supposed to step on it. Put the pedal down spiritually. If you've got more time and more margin, it's more opportunity than ever before, to get into the word. It's more opportunity than ever before, to invest in somebody else's life. It's more opportunity than ever before to learn how to share your faith. Take a Greek class, whatever. Do something, but guys, don't take your foot off the gas.

There's young guys out there that don't have margin, but would love to have an older guy with margin invest in their life, because now you are flexible. Because you know young guys aren't flexible. They like to think they're flexible, but they're really not, because they've got a lot of obligations. Think about the typical guy between 25 and 40. He's probably starting a family, starting a career ... Or starting a marriage, starting a family, starting a career. There's all these time demands on him, and you have the margin to fit into the cracks in his schedule. Will you sacrifice your comfort, your ease to meet the needs of a younger guy, who desperately needs an older guy to invest in him?

This is what Paul did. He was willing to sacrifice his comfort and look what he got for it. Verse six, he says, "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering. And the time of my departure has come." It's interesting. In the verse five, he says, "Timothy, as for you." And then in verse six, actually this could be translated, "As for me." It's like Timothy, this is you. You're young. You're in your prime preaching time. You're in your prime ministry time. Go get them tiger. As for me, I'm at the end. I'm at the end. So I can imagine Timothy getting this letter from his beloved spiritual father. Remember Paul calls Timothy, his beloved son, his ... Oh, I forgot the Greek word. We talked about at the beginning, but he calls him his beloved son.

So Timothy's looking at this letter from his beloved father and I want you to think about this. Imagine if you had a great relationship with your dad and you get a letter from him and he says, "I think my time's come. I'm about to go. I don't have much left. I'm being poured out. What I had in me is ... I can feel the bottom of the cup. I'm empty." And Paul uses this idea of a drink offering, because it's a great thing, because he's basically saying, my whole life has been an offering to God, for Him to use however he wants. And he says, "I am being poured out." Not I'm pouring out. "I am being poured out." He recognizes that God is the one Who is in control of his life. He says, "The time of my departure has come." And this word, departure is the word that they use to think like an army breaking camp and going home, or a ship pulling up its anchor and heading out of the Harbor.

So Paul, he's saying, I'm at the end. And then, he gives this famous quote, "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race and I have kept the faith." Now I want you to notice what he doesn't say. I've won the fight. I finished first in the race. I'm more faithful than anyone. He doesn't say that. He says, "I have fought the fight. I've finished the race." I ran a half marathon 10 years ago. Trust me, finishing was victory. These two girls ran past me. It was on Halloween and so a lot of people did it in costume and



they had bunny ears and bunny tails on the back of their yoga pants as they were running, right. And they were running, walking, running, walking. This is at the end of the race.

So they run past me and then they'd walk and I'd, old man stagger past them. And then they'd start running again. They'd run past me. And I'm like, "I am not letting two girls in bunny ears and bunny tails beat me to the finish line." They beat me to the finish line. Still got my medal, all right. This is the only place, the Christian life is the only place where our participation trophy's acceptable. Participate, run the race, fight the fight, finish, finish well. That's what Paul did. That's what we need to do. And then Paul says, This is the reward I got. "There's laid up for me, a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge will award to me on that day." This is not a crown of Paul's righteousness. This is Christ's righteousness.

Back then, when you finished a race, they put a wreath on your head. That was a crown. This is a wreath of Christ's righteousness, that Paul said, is just waiting for me and He's going to put it on my head. And not only that, it's not just for me, it's for all of you. You all have access to the same crown of righteousness, that the Apostle Paul got when he got his reward. But are we going to finish the race well? How will you finish the race?

So there's some questions on your handout and the questions are really sort of to help you take the next step with this and sort of apply this to how will you leave a legacy? So here's the thing. How will you leave a legacy? What's the secret to leaving a legacy? Well, you see in this passage. Diligence, long suffering, hope. Knowing that Jesus is coming back or in the words of Churchill, "Never give in. Never give in." The Christian life, never give in. Never, never, never, never. Never yield to the overwhelming might of the enemy. We have the power of Christ to overcome the enemy and we need to take younger men along with us as spiritual fathers.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for this letter, this pouring out of Paul's heart, this almost deathbed letter that Paul writes to Timothy to tell him the things that are the most important. Lord would we take these lessons and would we share them with the younger men around us, just as Paul shared it with the young men that he had disciples. Lord, give us Timothys, give us Titus-s, give us Barnabas-s, give us John Marks that we can pour into men for your glory to build your kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.